NORWOOD

OR

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND

Henry Ward Beecher

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NORWOOD:

OR,

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

REPRINTED FROM "THE NEW YORK LEDGER."

NEW YORK:
FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT.
1895.

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"TWENTY YEARS AFTER."

On January 3, 1866, in response to inquiries from Mr. Bonner as to the progress he was making with the writing of his novel, Mr. Beecher sent him this note:

MY DEAR MR. BONNER: I know that you have a good right to know something of the story of which you kindly inquire, and will give you some insight into matters.

I could have written a sketchy and superficial story with perhaps a few weeks' effort. But the more I reflected the less I liked to do so. The very liberal terms which you proposed to me seemed to me to merit, not merely a story, but, if I could, one that would be as good twenty years hence as on the day it appeared. To do this it was not enough that I should have leisure, but that I should get my mind out of the run of public questions in which I have been so deeply concerned, and trained to a very different line of thought.

I propose to make a story which shall turn, not so much on outward action (though I hope to have enough to carry the story handsomely) as on certain mental or inward questions. I propose to delineate a high and noble man, trained to New England theology, but brought to excessive distress by speculations and new views. This I feel quite competent to manage.

The heroine is to be large of soul, a child of nature, and, although a Christian, yet in childlike sympathy with the truths of God in the natural world, instead of books.

These two, the man of philosophy and theology and the woman of nature and simple truth, are to act upon each other and she is to triumph.

I propose introducing a full company of various New England characters, to give a real view of the inside of a New England town, its brewing thought, its inventiveness, its industry and enterprise, its education and shrewdness and tact. I purpose to introduce a Southerner of a rather noble type and show him off, faults and virtues, on this background of New England, and I may transfer the story in its close to the seat of war and introduce one of its campaigns. But it may so grow on my hands that I shall leave that for a separate effort. I am convinced that I have been wise in waiting, and that I shall be far more likely to succeed than I should have done if I had plunged at once into the matter, without study and meditation.

As to time, I do not see that I can promise with any confidence to give you MS. before May next. But by that time I hope to be so well assured of my work as to be willing to have the story begun, and also to have it so far advanced that you can be able to judge of its merit before beginning to print.

I am not neglecting you because I seem quiet, I assure you, and I hope to make haste much faster by-and-by for waiting hitherto.

I am like a painter commissioned to execute a large picture, whose room is full of studies and sketches, and his big canvas is sketched out and ready—all done but the painting.

The story was published in 1867, and Mr. Beecher was right; Norwood is "as good" to-day "as on the day it appeared."

THE PUBLISHERS.

New York, March, 1887.

PREFACE.

BEFORE the Civil War, I had for several years been a regular contributor to the NEW YORK LEDGER. During that great conflict I had almost entirely ceased writing for it. But when the war was closed, I was not unwilling to seek rest or relaxation from the exhausting excitement of public affairs, by turning my mind into entirely new channels of thought and interest.

In this mood I received Mr. Bonner's proposal to write a story for the LEDGER. Had it been a request to carve a statue or build a man-of-war, the task would hardly have seemed less likely of accomplishment. A very moderate reader, even, of fictions, I had never studied the mystery of their construction. Plot and counterplot, the due proportion of parts, the whole machinery of a novel, seemed hopelessly outside of my studies. But after-considerations came to my relief. I reflected that any real human experience was intrinsically interesting; that the life of a humble family for a single day, even if not told as skillfully as Wordsworth sung the humble aspects of the natural world, or as minutely faithful as Crabbe depicted English village-life, could hardly fail to win some interest. The habit of looking upon men as the children of God, and heirs of immortality, can hardly fail to clothe

the simplest and most common elements of daily life with importance, and even with dignity. Nothing is trivial in the education of the King's Son!

By interesting my readers, if I could, in the ordinary experiences of daily life among the common people, not so much by dramatic skill as by a subtle sympathy with Nature, and by a certain largeness of moral feeling, I hoped to inspire a pleasure which, if it did not rise very high, might, on that account, perhaps, continue the longer. I had rather know that one returned again and again to parts of this most leisurely narrative, than that he devoured it all in a single passionate hour, and then turned away from it sated and forgetful.

I can only wish that all who use the pen might fall into hands as kind, as considerate, and as forbearing as I have. Norwood was mostly written in Peekskill. There is not a single unpleasant memory connected with it. It was a summer child, brought up among flowers and trees.

When the last sheet of the manuscript of Norwood was ready for the press, I sent the following letter with it: —

My dear Mr. Bonner: You have herewith the last line of Norwood. I began it reluctantly, as one who treads an unexplored path. But as I went on, I took more kindly to my work, and now that it is ended I shall quite miss my weekly task.

My dear old father, after his day of labor had closed, used to fancy that in some way he was so connected with me that he was still at work; and on one occasion, after a Sabbath-morning service, some one in a congratulatory way said to the venerable and meek old patriarch: —

"Well, Doctor, how did you like your son's sermon?"

"It was good; — good as I could do myself." And then, with an emphatic pointing of his forefinger, he added, "If it had n't been for *me*, you 'd never have had him!"

If any body likes Norwood, my dear and venerable Mr. Bonner, you can poke him with your finger and say, "If it had n't been for *me*, you would never have had it."

No one can imagine how true is the last paragraph of the letter above. To all the other pleasant associations of Norwood, Mr. Bonner has, by his more than fraternal kindness, added the highest and most enduring charm of a generous friendship.

H. W. BEECHER.

BROOKLYN, 1867.

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NORWOOD;

OR,

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Since the introduction of railways, thousands of curious travellers every summer have thronged New England, have seen its manufacturing villages, and admired its general thrift. But those who know its scenery only by the river-valleys, know little of it; and those who have seen its people only in cities, are little acquainted with New-England character.

Men speak of Yankee character, as if there was but one type which pervaded New England. It is true, that there are some few marks which New-England men have in common. But the differences are greater than the likenesses. Nowhere else in the nation are men so differentiated. The loose structure of Southern society gave to its citizens an appearance of greater personal freedom; and in the great Western States various causes have produced far more freedom of manners, and more frankness and spontaneous geniality. Yet it will be found that neither in the South, nor in the West, is there so large a proportion of the population which is original, contrasted, and individualized in taste, manners and opinions, as in New England. If we should employ a scientific method, and speak of a Western genus, and a Southern genus, and a Middle State genus, then it will be found, that none, nor all, are so rich in *species*, as the genus New England.

The scenery of New England is picturesque rather than grand. Scarcely any other excursion could be planned which would so well fill a summer vacation, as one which, winding leisurely up through the western portions of Connecticut, of Massachusetts, and of Vermont, reached a climax at St. Albans, on the eastern shore of Lake Champlain; a place in the midst of greater variety of scenic beauty than any other that I remember in America. On the east rise the successive masses of the White Mountains, seemingly close at hand; on the west is Lake Champlain, swarming with green islands, and beyond its waters, westward, rise the Adirondacs, not in chains or single peaks, but in vast broods, a promiscuous multitude of forest-clothed mountains. On the north is scooped out in mighty lines the valley of the St. Lawrence; and, in clear days, the eye may spy the faint glimmer of Montreal.

Such a ride from New Haven to St. Albans, from Long Island Sound to Lake Champlain, can scarcely be matched for the charms of its scenery, the number and beauty of its villages, for the general intelligence and culture of its people, for the universal thrift following universal industry, and for crisp originalities of character.

The maritime population of New England is very unlike all the rest. The foreign element has greatly modified society. Commerce and manufacturing have worn away many of the primitive New England traits; and the wealth and refinement of the cities have to some extent overlaid the peculiar New England element by a cosmopolitan gilding. The remote neighborhoods and hill-towns yet retain the manners, morals, institutions, customs and religion of the fathers. The interior villages of New England are her brood-combs.

Our simple story of domestic life will take us to a point intermediate between the rugged simplicity of mountain towns and the easier life of the cities.

A traveller going north from Springfield, in Massachusetts, soon perceives before him an abrupt barrier, running east and west, which, if compared with the country on either side, might be called mountainous. The two westernmost summits are Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke. By a narrow passage between them comes through the Connecticut River. Passing between these hill-mountains, we enter a great valley or basin, some twelve miles wide and thirty long, which one might easily imagine to have been once a lake; the Pelham hills on the east, Sugar-loaf on the north, and the Holyoke range on the south, forming barriers on three sides, while its waters on the west were stayed by the slopes of those hills which, in the middle of western Massachusetts, are all that remain of the famous Green Mountains.

Look with my eyes, good reader, upon the town of Norwood, which, refusing to go down upon the fat bottom-lands of the Connecticut, daintily perches itself upon the irregular slopes west, and looks over upon that transcendent valley from under its beautiful shade trees, and you will say that no fairer village glistens in the sunlight, or nestles under arching elms! It is a wonder that Norwood was ever allowed to venture so near to the low grounds of the Connecticut; for it was early settled, not far from thirty years after the Pilgrims' landing. How the temptation to build upon the top of the highest hill was resisted, we know not.

Did the New England settler alight upon hill-tops, like a sentinel, or a hawk upon the topmost bough, to spy danger at its first appearing? Or had he some unsconscious sense of the poetic beauty of the scriptural city set upon a hill—some Jerusalem, lifted up, and seen from afar, in all its beauty? Or was he willing to face the sturdy winds of New-England hill-tops, rather than to take the risk of malaria in the softer air of her valleys? Whatever the reason, the chosen spot in early days seems to have been a high and broad-backed hill, where the summer came last, and departed earliest; where, while it lingered, it was purest and sweetest; where winter was most austere, and its winds roared among the trees, and shook the framed houses with such awful grandeur, that children needed nothing more to awaken in their imagination the great Coming Judgment, and the final consuming storms, when the earth should be shaken and should pass away!

Norwood, a town of five thousand inhabitants, like hundreds of other New England towns, had in a general and indistinct way an upper, middle and lower class. A wholesome jealousy of their rights, and a suspicion among the poor that wealth and strength always breed danger to the weak, made the upper class—who were ranked so by their wealth, by their superior culture, and by the antiquity of their families in town—politically weaker than any other.

The middle class comprised the great body of the people, all dependent upon their skill and activity for a living, and all striving to amass property enough to leave their families at their death in independent circumstances.

The lower class of a New England village is chiefly composed of the hangers-on—those who are ignorant and imbecile, and especially those who, for want of moral health, have sunk, like sediment, to the bottom. Perhaps nowhere in the world can be found more unlovely wickedness—a malignant, bitter, tenacious hatred of good—than in New England. The good are very good, and the bad are very bad. The high moral tone of public sentiment, in many New-England towns, and its penetrating and almost inquisitorial character, either powerfully determines men to do good, or chafes and embitters them. This is especially true when, in certain cases, good men are so thoroughly intent upon public morality that the private individual has scarcely any choice left. Under such a pressure some men act in open wickedness out of spite, and some secretly; and the bottom of society wages clandestine war with the top.

But, fortunately for Norwood, the public sentiment, though strong and high in moral tone, had been by peculiar influences so tempered with kindness, that, far less than in surrounding places, was there a class of fierce castaways at the bottom.

The main street of Norwood was irregular, steadily seeking higher ground to its extreme western limit. It would have had no claims to beauty had it not been rich in the peculiar glory of New England—its Elm-trees! No town can fail of beauty, though its walks were gutters, and its houses hovels, if venerable trees make magnificent colonnades along its streets. Of all trees, no other unites, in the same degree, majesty and beauty, grace and grandeur, as the American Elm. Known from north to south through a range of twelve hundred miles, and from the Atlantic to the head waters of the rivers which flow into the western side of the Mississippi, yet, in New England, the elm is found in its greatest size and beauty, fully justifying Michaux's commendation of it to European cultivators, as "the most magnificent vegetable of the Temperate Zone." Though a lover of moisture and richness, the elm does not flourish so well upon pure vegetable soils as on intervale lands, stronger in mineral ingredients than river meadows.

Single spots, finer than any in New England, there may be in other lands; but such a series of villages over such a breadth of country, amidst so much beauty of scenery, enriched, though with charming and inexpensive simplicity, with so much beauty of garden, yard, and dwelling, cannot elsewhere be found upon the globe. No man has seen America, who has not become familiar with the villages of New England and the farms of the North-western States. Yet every one will confess that a large part of this scenic beauty of New England is contributed by trees,—and particularly by the elm. The Elms of New England! They are as much a part of her beauty as the columns of the Parthenon were the glory of its architecture.

Their towering trunks, whose massiveness well symbolizes Puritan inflexibility; their over-arching tops, facile, wind-borne and elastic, hint the endless plasticity and adaptableness of this people;—and both united, form a type of all true manhood, broad at the root, firm in the trunk, and yielding at the top, yet returning again, after every impulse, into position and symmetry. What if they were sheared away from village and farm house? Who would know the land? Farm-houses that now stop the tourist and the artist, would stand forth bare and homely; and villages that coquette with beauty through green leaves, would shine white and ghastly as sepulchres. Let any one imagine Conway or Lancaster without elms! Or Hadley, Hatfield, Northampton, or Springfield! New Haven without elms would be like Jupiter without a beard, or a lion shaved of his mane!

And so, reader, as one loves to approach a mansion through an avenue of elms, we have led you through a short discourse of trees, to our homely story.

CHAPTER II.

ABIAH CATHCART

Abiah Cathcart was an honorable specimen of a New-England farmer. Any one accustomed to judge of men would see at a glance that he did not belong to that class of farmer-drudges, who tease Nature for a living, and make up for lack of skill and knowledge of their business by an insatiable and tormenting industry. He thought out his work, and then worked out his thoughts. He was a man of great bodily strength; of calmness and patience, joined to an inflexible will. His face accurately recorded his nature. It was large-framed, not mobile, but clear and open in expression; it exhibited more of goodness and wisdom, than of feeling or imagination. Had he been clothed in the habiliments and seated on the bench of a court, every one would have said, " He looks every inch a judge."

He received from his parents a healthy body, a sound judgment, habits of industry, a common-school education, and besides, nothing ;—save their good name and wholesome example. In all his boyhood, and till he was eighteen years old, he had probably never altogether had five dollars of "spending money" from his father. He used to tell his own boys, afterward, with some quiet pride, that he had never spent for mere pleasure a single dollar which he had not himself earned by hard work. He believed it to be almost immoral to spend property which had not been seasoned by one's own toil or skill. He used to say that pleasure was wholesome and indispensable when one had earned a right to it, but that amusement got for nothing relaxed a man and demoralized him.

When he was eighteen years old, Cathcart bought his time of his father for two hundred dollars. These were considered very liberal terms in those days. A son's services for three years before his majority were no small part of the working capital of a small farm.

Being master of his time, he considered and made an inventory of his goods and properties. First, there was a good stout body six feet high and well developed; a face and head that an honest man need not be ashamed to carry through the world. Next, he had a suit of new woollen clothes, and one old suit; six pairs of woollen stockings, which his mother's own hands had knit from wool which grew, under his own eye, on his father's flock; a pair of new thick boots for Sundays, an every-day pair, an axe, a brave heart—honest and steadfast; this was all that he carried out of his father's house. No! He carried likewise his father's blessing—unspoken, but not the less real; and his mother's prayers, silent and gentle, but which could never miss the road to the throne of all bounty.

Life was before him. He did not waver an hour as to his plans. He was a farmer's son, he knew how to work, and by work he meant to thrive. His vision of success was not extravagant—a homestead and a family; and property to support and educate his children until they should be old enough to take care of themselves. This was the measure of his dream.

This ought not to seem difficult. And it would not be, in new regions where land may be had for a nominal price, and where the climate prolongs the summer, while it straitens the winter within narrow bounds. But in old New England, in the neighborhood of large towns, where land is expensive, summers short, winters long, and the soil not indulgent, yielding its moderate crops to coercion rather than to coaxing, it is not easy for a man who has only his own hands for a capital to buy a farm, stock it, earn upon it the means of paying for it, and at the same time to support a growing family.

This did Abiah Cathcart by intelligent industry and sturdy perseverance. Not a thing did he ever get by craft. And who shall blame his honest pride, afterward, when he was wealthy, that he had created his own fortune? Wealth created without spot or blemish is an honest man's peerage; and to be proud of it is his right. It is not the empty pride of money, but pride of skill, of patience, of labor, of perseverance, and of honor, which wrought and secured the wealth!

When he left his father's house he hired out at teaming, twelve dollars a month and found. Cathcart had this sign of a sound nature—that he loved a horse. His employer gave him some discretion in buying and selling; and soon, by purchase and exchange, Cathcart had made up the best team in the neighborhood Nothing went over the road that everybody stared at more than his horses. It pleased him to see men pull up, look over the horses, and exclaim:

"That's a team for you! I say, mister, will you sell those horses?"

He was pleased almost every day. His horses were moderately large but compact, and the very models of strength. Look at them! The fine ear, the clean and finished look of their heads, and, above all, the large, lively eyes that easily change expression, make it certain that they have nerve as well as muscle. If you doubt, you should see them when a heavy load threatens to stall them; the rousing, the excitement, the prodigious swell of muscles, and, when the load is safely brought up or through, the nervous flash of the eye, and the restless champ upon the bit! He loved their company—loved to feed them—loved to take his book (he was ever and always a reader) at noon, after his frugal meal was done, and sit by his team, while the horses ground their oats, or cracked and craunched their Indian corn. Do you wonder, reader, at such pleasure? Then you know little of some scenes of life. Ask an old Western wagoner, what have been the happiest hours of his life—and he will tell you—

"Well, stranger, I've seen some pretty jolly times. But, for solid comfort, I think I've enjoyed the most when I was layin' in my wagon near a creek, and the fire was flickerin' among the trees, and I was jest goin' to sleep—I think I never heard anything quite so pleasant as my horses, at both ends of the wagon, chankin corn!"

His employer died. It being autumn, Cathcart engaged to clear off a piece of mountain wood, and haul it to town, at so much a cord. Doing well at this, the next fall he took a contract for making charcoal, and became almost a hermit in the woods—chopping, piling, and tending the heap; and, until he had completed the job, living in a shanty of his own construction.

In summer, he worked upon the farm, getting fair wages; and thus, in five years he found himself rich--for he had earned a thousand dollars and won a royal woman's heart.

CHAPTER III.

RACHEL LISCOMB.

RACHEL LISCOMB, daughter of Deacon Liscomb—tall, slender, straight, with black hair and dark eyes, a brunette—looked at him one day as they walked home from meeting, with a look that he never got over. She was one of the few without gifts of speech, whose bearing and looks are a full equivalent for them. A farmer's daughter, she was well-practised in work. And, a New-England woman, she was of a deep moral nature and reflectively intelligent. One who looked for attractive manners would pass her by unseen. Like a geode, the exterior was homely, the crystals were dark-chambered within.

Upon her rested the thoughts of Abiah Cathcart. She went but little from home, except on Sunday to church, and to the singing-school. But twice had Cathcart visited her father's house, and yet for a year, when they met, both hid or strove to hide a sensibility of which neither was ashamed, but which each was ashamed to feel without some sign that the other felt it too. Our finer feelings are like the evening primrose, all the sunlight but shuts them closer. And yet, when evening comes and dews are falling, if you will watch, you shall see the twilight with gentle influence unroll them one by one, with visible motion, each blossom throwing forth, as it opens, its offering of delicate odor.

They were walking silently and gravely home one Sunday afternoon, under the tall elms that lined the street for half a mile. Neither had spoken. There had been some little parish quarrel, and on that afternoon the text was, "A new commandment I write unto you, that ye love one another." But, after the sermon was done, the text was the best part of it. Some one said that Parson Marsh's sermons were like the meeting house—the steeple was the only thing that folks could see after they got home.

They walked slowly, without a word. Once or twice 'Biah essayed to speak, but was still silent. He plucked a flower from between the pickets of the fence, and unconsciously pulled it to pieces, as, with troubled face, he glanced at Rachel, and then, as fearing she would catch his eye, he looked at the trees, at the clouds, at the grass, at everything, and saw nothing—nothing but Rachel. The most solemn hour of human experience is not that of death, but of Life—when the heart is born again, and from a natural heart becomes a heart of Love! What wonder that it is a silent hour and perplexed?

Is the soul confused? Why not, when the divine spirit, rolling clear across the aerial ocean, breaks upon the heart's shore with all the mystery of heaven? Is it strange that uncertain lights dim the eye, if above the head of him that truly loves hover clouds of saintly spirits? Why should not the tongue stammer and refuse its accustomed offices, when all the world—skies, trees, plains, hills, atmosphere, and the sound earth—spring forth in new colors, with strange meanings, and seem to chant for the soul the glory of that mystic Law with which God has bound to himself his infinite realm—the law of Love! Then, for the first time, when one so loves that love is sacrifice, death to self, resurrection, and glory, is man brought into harmony with the whole universe; and like him who beheld the seventh heaven, hears things unlawful to be uttered!

The great elm trees sighed as the fitful breeze swept their tops. The soft shadows flitted back and forth beneath the walker's feet, fell upon them in light and dark, ran over the ground, quivered, and shook, until sober Cathcart thought that his heart was throwing its shifting network of hope and fear along the ground before him!

How strangely his voice sounded to him as, at length, all his emotions could only say, "Rachel—how did you like the sermon?"

Quietly she answered—

"I liked the text."

"'A new commandment I write unto you, that ye love one another.' Rachel, will you help me keep it?"

At first she looked down and lost a little color; then, raising her face, she turned upon him her large eyes, with a look both clear and tender. It was as if some painful restraint had given way, and her eyes blossomed into full beauty.

Not another word was spoken. They walked home hand in hand. He neither smiled nor exulted. He saw neither the trees, nor the long level rays of sunlight that were slanting across the fields. His soul was overshadowed with a cloud as if God were drawing near. He had never felt so solemn. This woman's life had been entrusted to him!

Long years—the whole length of life—the eternal years beyond, seemed in an indistinct way to rise up in his imagination. All that he could say, as he left her at the door, was:

"Rachel, this is forever—forever."

She again said nothing, but turned to him with a clear and open face, in which joy and trust wrought beauty. It seemed to him as if a light fell upon him from her eyes. There was a look that descended and covered him as with an atmosphere; and all the way home he was as one walking in a luminous cloud. He had never felt such personal dignity as now. He that wins such love is crowned, and may call himself king. He did not feel the earth under his feet. As he drew near his lodgings, the sun went down. The children began to pour forth, no longer restrained. Abiah turned to his evening chores. No animal that night but had reason to bless him. The children found him unusually good and tender. And Aunt Keziah said to her sister:

"Abiah's been goin' to meetin' very regular for some weeks, and I shouldn't wonder, by the way he looks, if he had got a hope. I trust he ain't deceivin' himself."

He had a hope, and he was not deceived; for in a few months, at the close of the service one Sunday morning, the minister read from the pulpit: "Marriage is intended between Abiah Cathcart and Rachel Liscomb, both of this town, and this is the first publishing of the banns." Which notice was duly repeated for two successive Sunday mornings. Then old Uncle Bascom, the town clerk, issued the marriage certificate. Uncle Bascom had been town clerk, the boys used to think, ever since there was a town; so long that that town, without Giles Bascom as clerk, wouldn't be recognized. It was one of the marks, like the meeting-house the brick store, and Gallup's tavern, by which people knew tha this was the town of Dennis.

One day there appeared in the county paper two lines: "*Married:—On ——, at the house of the bride's father, Abiah Cathcart and Rachel Liscomb.*"

What a slender body is that for the world of meaning contained in it!

From the hour of his engagement, Cathcart was a different man. Every faculty was quickened, but most, his moral nature. He marvelled with himself what it should mean. All his life had he honored industry and integrity in thought and example. But all at once these qualities rose before him in a light of beauty which he had never before imagined. Hundreds of sermons had he heard on virtue and piety. But now, without any apparent reason, manliness seemed the only thing worth living for, and truth and purity seemed to him so noble that he strangely hungered for them Taught from his childhood to reverence God, he felt suddenly opened in his soul a gate of thanksgiving, and through it came also a multitude of thoughts of worship and praise. The world was recreated before his eyes. Nothing before was ever beautiful, if judged by his present sensibility. These experiences did not clothe themselves in language, nor work out in ideas and images for he was of too practical a nature. But they filled him with tenderness and manliness.

As the day of his marriage drew near. he felt a thousand reluctances and scruples. He feared that Rachel might not be happy with him—that it was not worthy in him to take her from the plain comforts of her father's house to the toil and limitation of his struggling lot—that she might be deceived in him, and not always find reason for such love as she now manifested. He looked upon her with reverence, and far greater than before he was admitted to such intimate relations. Her every word was simple, every thought was truth, every feeling pure; and word, thought and feeling moved gently upon him in an atmosphere of love. He worshipped God with reverence. He worshipped Rachel with love; he came to her as one comes to an altar or a shrine. He left her as one who has seen a vision of angels.

Outwardly, and in consonance with the customs of the neighborhood, he was gay and jovial at the wedding; but down deep in his soul he was as solemn, before Rachel, as if God spoke and he listened.

How wondrous are the early days of wedlock, in young and noble souls! How strange are the ways of two pure souls, wholly finding each other out; between whom for days and months is going on that silent and unconscious intersphering of thought, feeling, taste, and will, by which two natures are clasping and twining and growing into each other!

Happy are they who know, and well Cathcart knew, how to bring such wisdom with loving, that selfishness, a poisonous weed, shall die out; and love clothed with reverence shall grow and thrive with power and beauty, all one's life! For, if there be one root in which resides the secret of producing immortal flowers, it is Love.

CHAPTER IV.

STARTING IN LIFE.

After his marriage, 'Biah Cathcart, (as he was familiarly called by his neighbors,) not without much thought and consultation, determined to buy him a farm. After many searchings, and much deliberation, he chose a place of sixty acres, two miles from the goodly town of Norwood. There were, besides, twenty acres of woodland, lying three miles away, mountain lots, as they were called. On the home farm there was an old-fashioned farm-house, of two stories.

But instead of one story additions, in the rear, such as are now built, for kitchen, shed, &c., the rear roof ran from the ridge-pole down nearly to the ground, covering the two stories and the single story with one long slant.

The former occupant had suffered the property to waste. Paint had long since ceased to cover the clapboards on the sides: the roof was patched and cumbered with moss, and the water gutters at the eaves had collected so much of dust and decayed leaves, as to form little patches of soil, out of which grew a fringe of mingled vegetation. Both flowers and weeds, whose seeds had been lodged there by birds, or uplifted by the winds, grew lovingly together, and cast their slender shadows down upon the cornice, like a pencil tracery of arabesques.

It was the day that Dr. Wentworth had been called to see Widow Nance, a mile beyond, that Cathcart took in hand the old house.

"You see, Doctor, that I've got a job here. Old Templeton's liquor bills were so heavy that he couldn't afford paint or putty."

"Make a clean job of it,' Biah. You'll have to lay these chimney-tops over again; filling and pointing won't do. I suppose you will shift your flower garden, too, from the roof to the ground."

"Flower garden?"

"Yes, poor things," said the Doctor, going to the back eaves and standing upon an old wash-bench, where he could look upon the low roof.

"I wish I had this old mossy roof, or one just like it. I am willing to ride a mile out of my way, any time, to see the moss in Peak's ravine, and all along the wood on each side of it. How kind of it to creep over decaying things and cover their homeliness with such a cheerful garment! Did you ever think that in the animal kingdom there is no beauty in death. A crow, a dog or a wounded deer dies, and is soon consumed. They seem to have had their time when alive. But vegetation, with fewer privileges in life, has more comeliness after death. Nobody makes shrouds for trees. and so nature takes care of them and hides them under new life—making beauty do sexton's work, and shroud death with the garments of life. I was over yesterday at the ravine, and found an old tree-trunk, half decayed, on and around which was a garden such as no gardener could make. It lay on the edge of the wood; the stream of the brook had kept its mosses, of which I counted many species, in admirable health and color. Ah, it was like a trunk of emerald! Down on the south side, where the leaves had kept them warm all winter, were blood-root blossoms, white as snow, shooting up in squads, like white troopers mustering for some tournament; and at the upturned roots was a tangle of blackberry vines, as fine in lines as any thing that Raphael ever imitated from the ancients, and a great deal more beautiful. Men's eyes make finer pictures, when they know how to use them, than any body's hands can."

"And so, Doctor, I am to keep this half-acre of a roof, am I, just out of pity to this moss? And what'll become of us when it rains, with this green old sieve letting through enough rain to dampen every room in the house? I see—you want our custom, Doctor! We should soon have moss growing over us, as it is over old Templeton—though, by-the-bye, he never suffered when on earth from too much water, I'm thinking! Hiram Beers says he wouldn't touch it when he could get it, and now can't get it when he wants it. Hiram is very hard on old Templeton. He says the old man was so hot, that flowers ought to start early where his grave is."

"What a pity that thrift and sentiment can't compromise matters a little better! It would make any gardener's reputation if he could plant such a little moss-Eden as this. Well, if you choose to be healthy rather than beautiful, you must have your own way. I'll be back in a couple of hours. Widow Nance, poor thing, is about spent! Save me some of the moss—that great patch yonder, with cherry-stones heaped along its upper edge."

And with that he carried away his great blue eyes, and white face, wide at the top, but fine and clean cut, though large-featured to the very chin.

"As good sense at the bottom as ever man had," said Cathcart, as the chaise rolled out from under the elm trees, in front of the yard, "and he needs it all too, or his queer notions would run away with him. Rachel says the Doctor's face and presence are better than most doctors' medicine; and they are reviving. I always feel after he's gone as if there was more in every thing about me than I had any notion of before, though I can't exactly tell what it is."

It was about two o'clock when Dr. Wentworth returned, and, not seeing Cathcart, he walked under a ragged cherry-tree, and stood watching with a kind of sober smile the workmen, inspired with the subtle eagerness which the work of destroying is apt to infuse.

The shingles came down in showers. The light ones whirled and glimmered in the sunlight, and shied out hither and thither all over the yard. Those covered with moss came headlong and thumped the ground at his feet.

"Poor thing, do you know me?" raising a moss-loaded shingle thoughtfully, as if it were alive; and he laughed out as if he had been answered by some unexpected cry.

For a rakeful of shingles had sent a flock of hens in sudden scare toward the barn-yard, while the great golden-speckled rooster drew up with magisterial dignity and called out, "Cut-tark-cut, cut, cut?" Receiving no answer, with a low-crooning noise in his throat, he cocked his eye, first at the doctor, then at the house, as much as to say, "Do you know what's going on here?" And then, letting down his right foot which had been drawn up, in suspense, he pompously moved off to lecture his hens, that were already picking and scratching in the straw, upon the mystery of life.

The doctor drew near the now cast-away gutter, and stooping, plucked two or three of the weeds, and putting them under his hat band, laid down his hat on the well-stone, while he unrolled the ricketty old windlass and sent down the remnants of a bucket for water. It was an old-fashioned well, of mysterious depth. If you looked down its narrow and dark throat, you saw nothing. If you still looked, and dropped a pebble down, a faint light was reflected from the crinkling water far below. For four or five feet at the top, the stones were lined with moss. Up, after long winding, came the bucket, spurting out its contents on every side and filling the well with a musical splashing sound, reserving hardly enough, at last, to serve for a good drink. "Well, 'Biah, I understand the old proverb—truth is at the bottom of the well. If I was to go down after the water, very likely there is foul air enough down there to put me out like a candle; and if I send a bucket down the greatest part leaks out before I can reach it. Much work and little truth do men get in the wells they dig now-a-days."

"But come in and see the house."

"I have seen it too often. Wait till you have lived awhile here and changed every association. I shall see the terrible sight that I witnessed when old Templeton had *delirium tremens.* He yelled and moaned by turns, saw men and devils after him, and died more horribly than any other creature that I ever saw, and I've seen many. Scour your walls, 'Biah."

Bad as the house was, the grounds were in even worse condition. The barns were utterly dilapidated; the fences were poor; the soil had been fleeced, and scarcely anything that was bad in husbandry had been left untried upon this much-enduring farm.

But this universal deterioration had so depreciated the market value of the place, that Cathcart was enabled to buy it—making a payment of a thousand dollars, and borrowing the rest, with his own time to pay it off. If he had been industrious and frugal before, he was far more so now. What he lacked in capital he must make up in enterprise.

For a year or two the struggle was close. His wife was his equal in industry and frugality. Her patience was never even ruffled. At four in summer and at five in winter, the light blazed on the hearth, and there were sounds in the barn. After the cattle were foddered, and until daylight, he worked at "closing" boots and shoes, earning thus a small addition to his means. At dark the same labor was resumed. This rigid, methodical industry was cheerfully pursued without intermission for years, and, at length, began to produce its results. One by one each field had been deepened; for Cathcart said: "No farmer owns any deeper than he can plow."

Little by little the near lots were cleared of stone, which reappeared in stone walls, built with a breadth and accuracy fit for a castle wall, and which at length were carried around the whole farm. The low-lying lots, filled with muck, were drained and reduced to meadows; and acres, which before had been impassable to cattle, except in the driest summer weather, or, when frozen, became solid, and the most productive of all the farm. The number of division fences was greatly reduced, Cathcart believing that far more ground was wasted by fences than any good farmer could afford. The land actually occupied by the fence, the waste each side of it by brambles or weeds, the time consumed in clearing these useless occupants away, if the farmer was neat, Cathcart argued, constituted in ten years a heavy tax on industry.

In such a climate, in such a soil, and in such a community, a farm will not pay, unless it be made to move with the accuracy of a machine, and with an economy which reaches to the most minute elements.

Availing himself of Dr. Wentworth's library, he had read the best works on husbandry, and extracted from them enough to guide his practice to a result far beyond that which was common in the neighborhood. Whoever had, at first, criticized the new-fangled farming, no longer doubted its success, when, at length, the farm was clear of debt, and returning no mean revenue.

Here years rolled on, and Cathcart grew to prosperity and into universal respect. Sons and daughters were born to him; with only two of whom, however, shall we have to do—the youngest two—Barton and Alice, who will in due time take their places in our history.

CHAPTER V.

THE WENTWORTHS.

THE night on which Rose Wentworth was born was furnished out with all suitable auguries. It was more nearly morning than night. That was well, to be born as the day was breaking and morning was fresh on all the earth. The dew lay pure on all the ground, and the birds were singing.

The time was late in April, and the resurrection of the vegetable world was going on. If one feels the influence of the seasons upon his natal hour, it was fit that Dr. Wentworth's first-born should come, not with the wan and waning months of autumn, but in the months of newness, when all things feel the touch of recreative power. The day before had been soft and showery. Southern winds filled the air with moisture and that fragrant smell of soil and the slight balsamic odor of opening buds, which to some sensitive persons is strangely exhilarating, and which stirs the mind, with subtle suggestion, and, after the long imprisonment of winter, sets the tremulous imagination into wild delight.

In the afternoon there had been several peals of thunder, which at that early season awakened surprise in all, but which the Doctor accepted as a part of a happy conjunction of natural phenomena significant of his child's life and fate.

Mother Taft had been waiting at the house for several days She seemed gently stirred at the sound of thunder. But even thunder could not move her serene nature to more than quiet wonder. Half the children in the village called her Auntie, and grew up with the impression that she was blood kin to them. Her face was young for one of fifty years, white and smooth. Her blue eye never flashed, or glowed, or burned, or pierced, or did any of those violent things to which eyes are addicted. Sad eyes; pitying eyes! For years she had stood a door-keeper for this sad world, and all that came in had begun their life with cries and wails, as if to prophesy their future. Had pity for those born into sorrow and crying at last stamped itself in her very features

When the thunder broke forth suddenly and rolled away in the distance with softened cadence, Mother Taft moved to the front door. Her walking was of that quiet kind that seems to have no more footsteps in it than has the shadow of a cloud that is gliding along the ground. Dr. Wentworth was coming through the door-yard, noting on every hand the condition of vegetation. The willows had thrown off their silky catkins, and were in leaf, the lilac buds were swollen large; the elm was covered with chocolate-colored blossoms; the *pyrus japonica* was reddening its clusters of crimson buds; the green-wooded *forsythia* was pushing yellow flowers; and the soft maple drew bees to its crimson tassels. In the border, peonies were breaking ground; snow-drops and crocuses were in bloom, as also hepaticas. The grass was becoming vividly green, and honeysuckles—especially over the trellis at the front door—were pushing new leaves. Yes, nature was fairly at work! The sap flowed again. Life was once more organizing myriads of curious textures and forms with silent forces infinite and almost omnipotent.

The Doctor searched not as one who would take, but only find. When the thunder sounded he bared his head as if he heard some message. His eye brightened with satisfaction, and, as Mother Taft opened the door, he said, softly but solemnly:

"She will hear God's voice. Flowers live. All things are coming forth. Her time is come. But she must have her crown."

Calling Pete, a great, black, clumsy-moving fellow, the Doctor said:

"Pete, I want some trailing arbutus; where does it blossom earliest?"

"What?" said Pete, looking perplexed.

"Where can you get the earliest Mayflower?"

"May-flowers—why, on Howlet's Hill, of course," said Pete, as if surprised that the Doctor did not know so plain a fact as that.

'Well, Pete, I haven't been here as long as you have, and don't know the ins and outs of the fields yet. But bring up the horses and drive me there. Don't let grass grow under your feet."

Passing through a pine wood, where no flowers were yet growing, and ascending the hill, through an open wood where hemlock and deciduous trees were mixed, they came near the top to a half cleared space, to the eye brown and barren, except here and there clumps of evergreen kalmias. Pete's eye was seldom at fault.

"There's some, Doctor, by that stump; and there's some beyond, ever so much." Clearing away the leaves he revealed the sweetest flower that opens to the northern sky. It is content, though lying upon the very ground. It braves the coldest winters. All the summers can not elaborate a perfume so sweet as that which seems to have been born of the very winter. It is like the breath of love. The pure white and pink blossoms, in sweet clusters, lie hidden under leaves, or grass, and often under untimely snows. Blessings on thee! Thou art the fairest, most modest and sweetest-breathed of all our flowers!

Enough for a wreath were soon gathered, and brought home—the fittest emblem wherewith to greet the little damsel.

Near twilight of the next morning, while the air was soft and balmy, and roots were swelling, and buds opening, and blossoms coming forth, and birds singing love-songs in all the trees, was born Rose Wentworth.

Dr. Reuben Wentworth was born in the old town of Norwich, Connecticut, in one of the old pre-revolutionary houses, under the shade of old elms. What with the early colonial history, and the always romantic legends of the Indians, he found the whole region about his birthplace rich in historic incident.

His family originally came from the eastern part of Massachusetts, and to this circumstance, probably, it was owing that he studied at Harvard University. A respectable student in the regular course, he had the reputation of being very busy with studies outside of the course. He early manifested a strong taste for Natural Science; yet was never satisfied with that part which the books contain, but, with an instinct as strong as that which leads an infant to its mother's breast for food, he turned from the dry descriptions and classifications to the living things themselves. At first, it was almost wholly an instinct, the sensibility of exquisite taste. But to this was added, by gradual unfolding, a rational element, and then a moral sympathy, until he found himself united to the organized system of nature with every part of his being.

This task did not detach him from the love of books, nor of society, nor of art and literature. He had warm sympathy for every thing human, and for all the proper works of man—but under and behind it, was a strong and silent sympathy and alliance with Nature; silent:—for, during all his education, Reuben Wentworth had a vague impression that his tastes, if fully disclosed, would render him liable to the charge of being a dreamer, and a poetical idealist.

The uncle, whose purse had carried him through college, was an old bachelor of fifty years—spry, lean, and chipper—Ebenezer by name. But people are usually overclothed with names; and as men in summer or at work, throw off their superfluous raiment till their arms are bare, so most folks dispense with a portion of their names; and Ebenezer Wentworth passed everywhere as *Uncle Eb.* He wrote his name Eb. Wentworth—tying them together with a long flourish, as if afraid they would get separated. He used to laugh at people's names.

" Folks use their children as if they were garret pegs, to hang old clothes on—first a jacket, then a coat, and then another jacket. You have to take them all down to find either one. Our children go trudging all their lives with their load of names, as if they were old Jews returning with an assortment of clothes. People use their children as registers to preserve the names of aunts and uncles, parents and grandparents, and so inscribe them with the names of the dead, as if tombstones were not enough." And so he would run on for an hour, if any one would listen, and even if they did not; for he was a natural talker—talked nearly all the time when awake—no more if men listened to him, no less if they did not. Unlike the race of natural talkers, his conversation contained a great deal of good sense, and of shrewd observation. It was full of whims, too, and ludicrous exaggerations, particularly when any one opposed him. There was no excess and no absurdity which he would not zealously defend, if some sober and literal man sought logically to corner him. He disputed axioms, refused to admit first principles, laughed at premises, and ran down conclusions, dogmatized and madly asserted, with the merriest and absurdest indifference to all consistency; for which there is no parallel, unless it be that of a very lively horse, in a very large pasture, with a very gouty man trying to catch him.

But this was superficial. At bottom Uncle Eb. was a stern moralist and loyal to the last degree in his conduct to honor and truth.

If you had a pet theory, or an assumptious argument, or a logical brat prigged up with pretentious authority, Uncle Eb. was the most dangerous of men to entrust it with. He was a sore trouble to theologians and a nuisance to theorists. But if you were dying, he was just the man to entrust your estate with. Punctual, exact, sharp, disinterested, but pragmatical, he neither would cheat nor allow cheating. There was no more vaporing, no more wild caracoles of the horse aforesaid, in open fields, but, like the horse in harness, he settled down to his work with edifying sobriety and regularity.

"Well, Reuben, you graduate this summer. What next? What are you going to do? You are pretty well stuffed with trash. It will take several years to forget what you ought not to have learned, and to get rid of the evil effects of foolish instruction. But that will come pretty much of itself. College learning is very much like snow, and the more a man has of it the less can the soil produce. It's not till practical life melts it that the ground yields anything. Men get over it quicker in some kinds of business than in others. The college sticks longest on ministers and schoolmasters: next, to lawyers; not much to doctors; and none at all to merchants and gentlemen. You can't afford to be a gentleman, and so you must choose among other callings."

"Can't a man, Uncle Eb., be a gentleman in any respectable calling?"

"Oh, dear, no. *My* gentleman must take all his time to it, spend his life at it, be jealous of everything else. He is a kind of perfect man, a sort of chronometer, for other men to keep time by. One is enough for a whole town. One is enough—two would be a superfluity, and a class of them simply a nuisance. A gentleman should have feeling—but should hide it. People of much sentiment are like fountains, whose overflow keeps a disagreeable puddle about them. He should have knowledge, but not like your educated men of our day whose knowledge sings and crows and cackles with every achievement. His knowledge should be like apples in autumn hanging silently on the bows—rich, ripe and still. A gentleman should be business-like by instinct. Affairs in his hands come to pass silently and without ado, as Nature compasses her results—the vastest range and round of spring work making less noise than one store or shop. I tell you, Reuben, a gentleman is a rare specimen. He requires so much in the making that few are made."

"But people consider you a gentleman, Uncle Eb."

"Tut, tut—no ridicule, young man! I am gentlemanly. That's another thing. I have worked too hard,—showing that I had not enough power. Power works easily. I have fretted too much. Fretting is a perpetual confession of weakness. It says, 'I want to, and can't.' Fretting is like a little dog pawing and whining at a door because he can't get in. No, no. A gentleman is like a fine piece of statuary, and must not be used, like a caryatide, to hold up porticos or cornices. He must be so fine that he accomplishes more while doing nothing than others do with all their bustle. He must be better than other men at the start, or he will grow rough in trying to mend matters, and so be like the best of common men, who only succeed in getting ready to live when it is time for them to die."

"Is not Squire Perkins a gentleman?"

"Good and polite! But not *my* gentleman. His grain is not fine. His mother was a sailor's widow, hearty and good-natured, but coarse in substance. All that Judge Perkins can claim is good nature, which is a mere matter of health. Good digestion—you are good-natured; bad digestion—you are morose! One of these days men will call things by their right names Then they won't say: he's of a good disposition; but, he has a good stomach. Half the grace that's going is nothing but food. Paul said the kingdom was not meat and drink. Very likely not hereafter. But it is here. Good steak and light bread is benevolence. Coffee is inspiration and humor. Good tea is tenderness and sprightliness—facts very humbling of our excellences. But they're facts. Perkins is a good fellow. But if he was old, had the rheumatism, and was to have his money stolen, he would be as sour as a crab-apple."

Young Wentworth was amused at his uncle's crotchets, and loved to oppose him just enough to keep the old gentlemen on the edge of extravagance, without being fairly driven over into absurdity.

"No, Reuben, gentlemen are fore ordained from all eternity. They can't be hurried up and put together on order, like a box of shoes for the southern market. A gentleman must see everybody without looking, and know everybody without inquiry, and say just the right thing to everybody without trying to; and, above all, he must make everybody in his presence do the best things they know how to do. That's the touchstone. I've seen men come almost up to it. But then they would let people get angry; they would suffer them to say and do disagreeable things. Tha will never do. The gentleman is a natural king. He has the intuition of people's nature, and can touch just the spot in them that is sweetest, and get out of them what they would never have wrought out of themselves. One or two gentlemen are enough for a town. They are steeples, which we put on churches, not on dwelling-houses."

"Very well, uncle, I will give up being a gentleman. Such a brilliant exception to good and well-bred men I was not born to be. What next?"

"You should never make a clergyman of yourself. You are not bad, but then you're not good. A man should be born to the pulpit. A musician is one whose brain naturally secretes musical ideas; a poet thinks in blossoms just as naturally as honeysuckles do; an inventor's head is made to work out mechanical combinations. Men are like trees, each one must put forth the leaf that is created in him. Education is only like good culture—it changes the size but not the sort. The men that ought to preach should be ordained in birth. The laying on of hands can't make an empty head full, nor a cold heart warm, nor a silent nature vocal. A minister is a genius in moral ideas, as a poet is in beautiful ideas, and an inventor in physical ideas."

"But are not all men born with moral natures, and may not cultivation develop them?"

"So, many trees have sweet sap besides the maple, but the maple only is so sweet as to be profitable for sugar. Cornstalks have saccharine matter as well as sugar-cane. But we plant one for grain and the other for sugar, just because it is so easy for one to bear grain, and so hard for it to make sugar; and so easy for the other to yield sugar, and so impossible to give grain. Find out whether a man's head is fertile in moral ideas. It is not enough that he should know what is right when he sees it. He should see it before it exists. New good, new truth, better justice should suggest itself to him on every side. He is an inventor of better good than men now possess. *Your* head, Reuben, does not run clear; you think a matter is right if only it is beautiful, with a little touch of wildness in it. Besides, the office of a minister won't agree with your natural carriage. You would run when you were expected to walk. You have nŏ respect for rules. You would scare every body once a month with some naturalistic notions gathered in your rambling in the fields Theology, like old Isaac, always puts its nose on its children to see if the smell of the fields is upon them. Isaac blessed Jacob because it was; theology blesses Jacob only when it is not! Natural religion is generally considered as poor stuff. Imported is thought more of than home-made—broadcloth proves better than linsey-woolsey. The church thinks that it will not do to make religion too easy; folks might take it up of themselves. You were not born for a pulpit. Few men are. Pulpits are queer places—candlesticks whose candles won't burn—learned men, but can't speak, like deep wells and a pump that won't fetch water."

"Ah, uncle, you don't like ministers, I am afraid. All that I have ever known were capital fellows—manly and sincere. But, as you say, I don't think I am good enough, and so I promise you upon my honor, that I won't be a clergyman."

In early life Uncle Eb. had been deeply wounded in a love affair, and saw his treasure borne off by a young minister. He had never married, and he never quite forgave the profession. But it is only just to say, that while he made cynical speeches about ministers in general, he had conceived the warmest attachment to many clergymen in particular.

"Perhaps you think I'd better be a lawyer?"

"There's worse things than that. But you would never make your bread at that business. It's a hot and drastic profession. You will see men chiefly on the selfish side. You will be always making a porridge of somebody's dirt. Pretty good fellows, lawyers are; but I wonder at it."

"I declare, uncle, I believe you mean to make a schoolmaster of me."

"No, sir; a man should never be a schoolmaster. That's a woman's business. Be a professor or nothing! Even then it's a poor business. Who ever heard of a college professor that was not poor? They dry up in pocket like springs after the wood is cut off from the hills. They are apt to get very dry in other ways, too. A man that teaches cannot afford to know too much. A teacher is like a needle. He should be small and sharp. If large, he cannot run easily through the garments to be made. The College President ought to be a great man—a sort of specimen,—something for the boys to remember as a pattern of a man."

"Well, uncle, as I am not a born gentleman, and can't make a good minister, am too good to be a lawyer, and must not be a schoolmaster; as I am too fat to be a professor, and not grand enough for a president,—I am afraid I shall have to go to sea for a living; for I am not fit to work, and should sell myself out of house and home, if I was a merchant."

"There is just one thing left, and a business proper for you you should be a doctor! You love nature. You love chemistry and botany. You are fond of all curious insearch and occult functions. A doctor, it is true, is everybody's servant. But you will be left to think and reason, without any master. And the riding, especially in the country, will suit your desultory nature."

"And, to sum it all up, uncle, you want me to be a doctor, because your father was one, and his father, and your brother, and for fear a link should be missing, you want me to study medicine That you want it, is enough."

CHAPTER VI.

WANDERING THOUGHTS.

YOUNG Wentworth, after graduating, took a regular course of medicine in Boston, with an average standing. By his uncle's liberality he spent a year in Vienna, and one in Paris. Longer he was to have remained. But his uncle's sickness brought him home, only in time to spend a few days with him before the eccentric but kind man died. His property was left to young Wentworth, and it proved greater than men had suspected. Some fortunate adventures, and sagacious investments, had put his affairs in such condition that his nephew found himself possessed of an income that removed one motive for exertion, and left him to pursue his profession from taste and kindness rather than from urgent necessity.

Refusing most flattering overtures for a city practice, Dr. Wentworth sought a sphere in Norwood, where he could be in daily and intimate converse with nature.

"She *is* my mother," he used to say, "and all her brood are my kin."

Dr. Wentworth would have succeeded in any liberal profession. But his nature was peculiarly adapted to the profession which he had chosen. Some men chill you; some cheer and inspire with mirth or humor; some stir in you vague suspicion, doubts, and distrust of men and life. But Dr. Wentworth's presence brought peace and trust. He radiated from his nature a perpetual June Singularly fortunate in temper and disposition, as well as in judgment and philosophic sense, he was still more fortunate in the rare gift of bearing unconsciously about with him an atmosphere which inspired health in body and soul upon those susceptible to subtle influences.

This was a notable element in his medical practice. His skill consisted in persuading men to get well. Sickness is very largely the want of will. Everything is brain. There is thought and feeling not only, but will: and will includes in it far more than mental philosophers think. It acts universally, not only upon mind, but just as much upon the body. It is another name for life-force. Men in whom this life or will-power is great, resist disease, and combat it when attacked. To array a man's mind and will against his sickness is the supreme art of medicine. Inspire in men courage and purpose, and the mind-power will cast out disease. He was himself the best medicine, and often cured by his presence those whom drugs would have scarcely helped. These cures through the spirit of the patient he regarded as far the most skilful and philosophical.

"Nothing ails her. It is only her imagination," said the nurse to him one day.

"*Only* the imagination? That is enough. Better suffer in bone and muscle than in the imagination. If the body is sick, the mind can cure it; but if the mind itself is sick, what shall cure that?"

These elements of character, in time, would have procured for him constant employment, even had he been poor, and in need of immediate occupation. But as he had a competence, and abundant occupation in his grounds and books, and in pleasant society, to which his tastes strongly inclined him, he found his professional services from the first in great demand; and furnished another instance of the willingness of men to aid those not in need, while those who are likely to starve if not at once befriended are put on a long probation.

For several years there was much pleasing and amiable speculation upon the social prospects of this promising physician—and surely the benevolence of his fellow-men is to be commended. Well married, a man is winged—ill-matched, he is shackled.

The good people of Norwood were enterprising, and very busy. They had little time, aside from their own affairs; and yet so kind were they, that scores of them spent much time in thinking for Dr. Wentworth, and in cheerfully devising for him an eligible connection. It is to be hoped that they were abundantly gratified, when he found a wife, without their help. Certainly there was no offence which alienated their sympathy; for, when Dr. Wentworth, returning from a fortnight's absence, appeared, on Sunday morning, in his pew at church, that pew became the centre of the church, and outmastered the choir and the pulpit!

"Who is this woman that is better than all of us?" *looked* as least a score of girlish faces—and another score of graver mother faces. Five or six in different parts of the house, in the most grave and decorous manner, spoke or whispered, each to some neighbor, an edifying comment, as follows:

"How old should you take her to be?"

"At least twenty-five."

"Thirty! not a year less."

"I don't think she cares much about dress; do you? She's rather too plain, if anything."

"Perhaps she depends on her manner. Do you notice how she rises, and sits down?"

"She comes up about to the doctor's shoulders, don't she? That's so sweet, always. If ever I marry, I should want his name to be Augustus, and he should have blue eyes, and my head should come just up to his shoulders. I think that would be so dear."

"Can you see her hands? Has she many rings?"

"Do you know if the doctor got anything by her? Of course he don't need it. He's got property enough of his own. But then, I think it tends to peace in the family, if both bring a little property. Money is of no use without piety. But, when a man has grace in his heart and money in his pocket, then he can have peace both with God and man."

"I believe she's proud. I've watched her ever since she's come in. And she hasn't looked around once. May be she thinks we aint worth looking at."

"Well, for my part, I don't think so. People don't come here to gape and stare, not if they're Christians. I b'lieve she's pious. We shall know next sacrament-time. If she comes to preparatory lecture and to sacrament, then you may know she's pious."

The sermon over, and the services ended, the minister, the deacons, and a few of the leading members, were introduced to the new comer. They hoped for a better acquaintance. They should be happy to call. They hoped she was pleased with Norwood. How did she like the church? Had she recovered from the fatigue of her journey? Had she ever been in Norwood before? Deacon Trowbridge solemnly hoped she would be strengthened to meet her responsibilities. And only spry and dry Deacon Marble ventured on a compliment.

"Well, ma'am, Dr. Wentworth allers was fond of flowers, and I knew he'd pick a good one when he came to choose."

If the people whispered a few covert opinions in church, it was a mere first-fruits of that harvest which waved during the intermission. Except the minister, the doctor was, undoubtedly, the most important man in Norwood.

"Took us rather by surprise, Judge! Some folks thought the doctor needn't gone out of town for a wife."

"Perhaps it's of long standing. The doctor has a good deal of romance. But she is of excellent family. I know them very well. Came over in the Mayflower."

"Did she? Why, she don't look so old?"

"Bless you, looks are deceiving," said Judge Bacon, his whole face looking amused at Mr. Truman's misconception.

Many there were that had a conscience about conversing on such themes upon Sunday. Mr. Edwards and his sister walked in a stately and quiet manner, without a word; and, as he carefully latched the gate, Dr. Wentworth and his wife were passing. Of course, he heartily shook hands, but not a word did he speak, nor his sister, after entering their tree-embosomed house. Sabbath reigned in their house and in their hearts.

The Miss Marshes, two sensible spinsters, found themselves among several neighbors, all in full criticism. Various were the reports and the hungry questions; but not a word could the plain old maids be got to say, good or ill.

"What *do* you think, Miss Anna?" said a neighbor to the eldest sister.

"I don't think anything about it."

"But you noticed her, didn't you?"

"No more than I did others. I hope to find her a pleasing person, when I shall know her. Did you not think the sermon unusually instructive to-day?"

"The sermon? Oh, yes; I'd most forgot about that. What *was* the text? La, me—I've forgot the text. My husband is sick, and I shall have to tell him about the sermon. What *was* it,—something about—minding our own business, or something—no doctrine—nothing but morality. Do tell me where the text was."

Hiram Beers, as usual, had gathered about him a knot of young men around the church door, and of those staying during the in termination, and quite a number of girls had been drawn to hear what Hiram would say—for Hiram's speeches belonged to the whole town.

"I think the doctor is a love of a man; and oh, I should like t know about his courtship."

Hiram overheard the whisper in which a Miss of fifteen had said this to her companion, and, assuming a confident air, he says:

"Why, Matilda, I know all about it. I drove the doctor ov you know, and he told me all about it!"

"He did? Oh, do tell us!"

"That I will—every word. You see the doctor meant to marry Miss Naxon, till he saw Miss Ferris; and he might have decided between *them*, but then Miss Greanleaf came to town, and then there was three of 'em! On lookin' into the matter the doctor found that he liked them just alike, to a grain, and as the law wouldn't let him marry all of 'em he couldn't take one without leaving two; and that, you see, would have been two griefs to one joy—not a fair bargain. So he was forced to go to Boston."

"Why, what did he go to Boston for?"

"Well, that's a pretty question! That's the only place to go to! Why, if a man wants anything he allus goes to Boston. Everything goes there, just as natural as if that city was the moon, and everything else was water, and had to go, like the tides. Don't you know all the railroads go to Boston? and sailors say—you ask Tommy Tafts—if you start anywhere clear down in Floridy and keep up along the coast, you will fetch up in Boston. They have to keep things tied up around there. They fasten their trees down, and have their fences hitched, or they would all of 'em whirl into Boston. They have watchers set every night, or so many things would come to admire Boston that the city would be covered down like Herculaneum. Of course the doctor went to Boston. Every single one of the first chop folks was married off the week afore he got there, but one; there was just one left. But she was the very best of the lot. The doctor saw her in Old South church. She was a singin', 'Come ye disconsolate.' The minute she set her eyes on the doctor——"

By this time the boys were snickering, and the girls giggling and our honest-faced little questioner began to doubt Hiram's authenticity. "Now, Hiram, I don't believe a word you say."

"Well, if you don't believe me, you just ask the doctor himself."

Not a smile was on his face. He looked at his listeners one by one with a quizzical solemnity, for a second, and then, as one who remembered pressing duties elsewhere, he walked away in exact imitation of the minister's gait.

Deacon Marble expressed to his wife Polly his good impressions of the doctor's wife, as they rode home in their rattling one-horse wagon.

"I should be glad to see the old mansion looking life-like again, as it did when Saltonstall was alive—fine old house. Mebbe too many trees round. The doctor sets a store on the trees, though. But the old place will spruce up, I guess, with a new wife."

"That's a pretty speech, Deacon Marble, as if the doctor hadn't lived three years, and had Agate Bissell for housekeeper, and a smarter and better you won't find if you sarch the whole State. Anybody that takes her place has got to stir round. I'm one that don't b'lieve there'll ever be any better housekeeper in that old mansion than Agate Bissell. There wasn't a chimney in town that smoked afore hers did in the morning, and there wasn't one house kept cleaner. After she'd scrubbed a floor you might eat your vittals off it, if it was'nt for the name of't. I don't b'lieve my pans are any cleaner, nor the milk any whiter than her rooms. And then it wasn't any Pharisee-work. She ain't one of those folks that makes the outside clean, and leaves the inside. It would do you good to look in her closets and cupboards, and drawers and boxes. It was as good as a picture. I don't b'lieve there was a spider in the house, from cellar to garret. She was allers cleanin and lookin', and huntin' and rubbin'."

"Yes, Polly, I guess you're right. I've got a woman down to my house purtey much the same sort. I kinder pity the dirt—it has a hard time in our house!"

Even Polly was liable to temptation, and her face looked as it had forty years ago, when compliments had brought a smile to it. But she was so thin—all nerve, bone and skin—that smiles slipped off easily, and left the same anxious and earnest face.

"There's no wastin' where Agate Bissell is. She can make a cent go as far as most folks' shillin.' She's had a hard time of it, too. The doctor's not particular and he wouldn't let her put his study to-rights. You know it's a great room, running the whole depth of the house, and full of books and stuff, and pictures, and engravin's, and stacks of all sorts of things, and the table full of rubbish, and chairs full of portfolios, and he'd never let Agate Bissell touch 'em. It was awful.

"'Nobody can tell,' she says to me, 'how I long to get in there.' The doctor 'll have much to answer for!"

"Yes, yes, Agate Bissell is distressin' neat. The mice have a hard time in her house—starved 'em out, I'm told—saved the cat's board by it. She is dreadful particular!"

There was something in the deacon's tone which did not suit his wife, and she sharply edified him:

"I wish you was half as particular, Deacon Marble, with your tongue as Agate Bissell is with her hands. Then you wouldn't make such foolish speeches as you do. You must needs compliment her, right in church, and afore the minister!"

"I compliment her?"

"Oh, don't make strange of it. I heerd what you said about flowers. So did she. Such kind of talk ain't thrown away. It sticks like burs, and makes folks think you like 'em more'n you do. Talking roses and poses to the girls is not becomin' in a deacon."

The deacon gave his horse a cut with his whip, and, being spirited, the animal suddenly sprang with a jerk that seemed likely to snap his wife's head off. If the mischievous man meant to put an end to the discourse, which was likely from this point to become personal, he succeeded.

How they ever made a deacon out of Jerry Marble I never could imagine! His was the kindest heart that ever bubbled and ran over. He was elastic, tough, incessantly active and a prodigious worker. He seemed never to tire, but after the longest day's toil, he sprang up the moment he had done with work, as if he were a fine steel spring. A few hours' sleep sufficed him, and he saw the morning stars the year round. His weazened face was leather color, but forever dimpling and changing to keep some sort of congruity between itself and his eyes, that winked and blinked, and spilt over with merry good nature. He always seemed afflicted when obliged to be sober. He had been known to laugh in meeting on several occasions, although he ran his face behind his handkerchief and coughed, as if *that* was the matter, yet nobody believed it. Once, in a hot summer day, he saw Deacon Trowbridge, a sober and fat man, of great sobriety, gradually ascending from the bodily state into that spiritual condition called sleep. He was blameless of the act. He had struggled against the temptation with the whole virtue of a deacon. He had eaten two or three heads of fennel in vain, and a piece of orange peel. He had stirred himself up, and fixed his eyes on the minister with intense firmness, only to have them grow gradually narrower and milder. If he held his head up firmly, it would with a sudden lapse fall away over backward. If he leaned it a little forward, it would drop suddenly into his bosom. At each nod, recovering himself, he would nod again, with his eyes wide open, to impress upon the boys that he did it on purpose both times.

In what other painful event of life has a good man so little sympathy as when overcome with sleep in meeting time? Against the insidious seduction he arrays every conceivable resistance. He stands up awhile; he pinches himself, or pricks himself with pins. He looks up helplessly to the pulpit as if some succor might possibly come thence. He crosses his legs uncomfortably, and attempts to recite catechism, or the multiplication table. He seizes a languid fan, which treacherously leaves him in a calm. He tries to reason, to notice the phenomena. Oh, that one could carry his pew to bed with him! What tossing wakefulness there! what fiery chase after somnolency! In his lawful bed a man cannot sleep, and in his pew he cannot keep awake! Happy man who does not sleep in church! Deacon Trowbridge was not that man. Deacon Marble was!

Deacon Marble witnessed the conflict we have sketched above, and when good Mr. Trowbridge gave his next lurch, recovered himself with a snort, and then drew out a red handkerchief and blew his nose with a loud imitation, as if to let the boys know that he had not been asleep, poor Deacon Marble was brought to a sore strait. But, I have reason to think that he would have weathered the stress if it had not been for a sweet-faced little boy in the front of the gallery. The lad had been innocently watching the same scene, and at its climax laughed out loud, with a frank and musical explosion, and then suddenly disappeared backward into his mother's lap. That laugh was just too much, and Deacon

Marble could no more help laughing than could Deacon Trowbridge help sleeping. Nor could he conceal it. Though he coughed, and put up his handkerchief and hemmed—it *was* a laugh—Deacon!—and every boy in the house knew it, and liked you better for it—so inexperienced were they!

Polly, his wife, was all that the deacon was not. No one had ever known her to laugh. Her utmost indulgence amounted only to a pale and vanishing smile, which looked more like a shadow crossing the face than sunlight upon it. Of a nervous, bilious temperament, she was thin, acute, intense and earnest to the last atom of her existence. There was no gradation or perspective in her conscience. The least wrong was a full-sized sin; and the smallest sin was worse than we can measure. Great sins were a terror for the future life, not for this. Of many edifying instructions which at different times he received, we will select but one, which occurred some years before Wentworth's marriage, but might, from its tenor, just as well be inserted in connection with that event, or at any other period during a score of years, for that matter.

"Deacon Marble, I wonder what you think will become of you! Such levity in the house of God is awful. I shouldn't wonder a minute if you was to be struck dead. You know that the man was destroyed for pickin' up chips and sticks on Sunday, and laughing is a good deal worse, especially in the house of God. I always said that I couldn't imagine why they ever made you deacon—a man whose eyes and face are always agoin' as if they were makin' fun of the sacred office."

The image raised by these last words seemed to touch the deacon's sense of the ludicrous, and he fell under the temptation again—though riding home, on Sunday, in full sight of his neighbors.

"I declare, Deacon Marble, you will bring reproach on religion." And looking at him through her spectacles, whose glasses were about four times the size of the eyes that snapped behind them, she continued—"I think deacon-timber was scarce when they picked you out."

"Mercy on us, Polly, I didn't make myself a deacon, and I didn't make myself, anyhow. I 'spose I perform pretty much as I was built. But, I never saw any harm in laughing. If it's a sin, I can't see what the Lord lets so many funny things happen for. I don't go and make things funny! They come to me. The whole world is full of queer things, and it aint my fault if I see them."

"That's your vain way. It don't seem to me that you can have any conscience about laughing at improper times and things. I once heard you snicker at a funeral. Besides, it leads to deceit. You know you hadn't any nose-bleed when you went out of church last summer, holding your handkerchief all over your face. I saw what 'twas. You was looking at that naughty, wicked boy puttin' a piece of grass in that man's ear, and he givin' himself a box on the ear—which he ought to have laid on the boy's ear."

Poor Marble went off into another burst, at the remembrance. "Why, Polly, he thought it was a fly, and he raised his big hand, so sly and cunning, to give the fly a wipe, and hit his own ear," —at which point he went off again into a chuckle, producing a churning motion all over his body.

Now, there was not another deacon in town that did so many good turns to those in trouble; and though his infirmity was known, sick people liked to have the little, spry old Deacon Marble come to pray at their bedsides. And when Widow Nance's cow died in calf, it was from Marble's yard, the very next night, that a cow was driven, and put in her yard. All the poor old shacks about town found a friend in Deacon Marble. This, too, was a source of much trouble to his guardian angel at home.

"I do believe you would rather spend your time with those shiftless reprobates than with the Lord's own saints."

"There's sartainly a pick among saints, Polly; but those poor creeturs don't mean any harm half the time; and nobody seems to pity them, and everybody's always pickin' at 'em and findin' fault with 'em. Somebody ought to have a kind side to 'em."

"They should behave better, then. There's no excuse for wickedness. '*First* pure, then peaceable,' Deacon. That settles it. I wish you was like Deacon Trowbridge. Did you ever see Pete, and Hiram Beers, and Ephe Barnes, hanging round him? Do you believe he'd spend his money in givin' gingerbread and fire-crackers to all the tatterdemalion boys, on trainin' days?"

Deacon Marble admitted facts. The very idea of such conduct seemed to raise a picture before him unsuited to sobriety.

"What *are* you laughing at now? You are as full of levity as flies are. Would you laugh if you was dying? I really believe you would! To think of it! A deacon, at your time of life, chirpin' as if you was a cricket—and goin' round, as if you was nothin' better'n a bird, singing and hoppin', instead of being a deacon, with an immortal soul in him! Sometimes I am afeerd you are in the gall of bitterness yet. You ought to examine your evidences, Deacon. Laughing is not one of the signs of grace, I'm sure. It's awful to be deceived; and you've a good many reasons to fear that you are deceivin' yourself."

Don't confound Mrs. Polly Marble with a mere scold. She was a woman of the utmost worth. She was full as severe upon her own doings as upon those of her other self, the deacon. She, too, was an excessive worker. Her vitality, if it were possible, was greater than her husband's. When she had risen at four o'clock, and, except at meals and prayers, had been on her feet every moment till night, up stairs and down, in the dairy, in the cellar, in the barn, in the wood-house, in chamber and kitchen, performing the multifarious duties of a farmer's wife with the most anxious and conscientious fidelity, she seemed not to have lost a particle of energy, but was still fresh, vital, and intense.

Nor was Mrs. Polly Marble a mere drudge. She was inquisitive of everything that went on in the world. She read the Missionary Herald every month, and the Boston Recorder every week, without the omission of a line. She remembered whatever passed in church. She rode every week into town for an afternoon female prayer-meeting, and stayed to the night lecture, and yet no one could say that aught was neglected, on these days, at home.

Her domestic lectures must not, therefore, be confounded with those which spring from irritableness, but must rank with the conscientious labors of anxious natures, who feel conscientiously called to make the world better, and who use their tongue as the most convenient instrument at hand.

Well, this will never do! We have quite forgotten Dr. Wentworth and his happy household. But so really happy were they all in that old mansion (for they never seemed more mellow, genial, and hospitable, than since this little child came), that they would not have known it if the whole world had neglected them!

Two years had passed busily and happily away, when the event occurred of which we have spoken, in the fifth chapter, and a girl was given to the household. The mother would call it Rose—for that was a favorite sister's name. The father called it Rose, for that united her to the flowers he so much loved. Others called her Rose, because it was so sweet a name for a girl; and therefore she was named Rose Wentworth!

CHAPTER VII.

A MERRY CHAPTER.

A wagon loaded with empty barrels drove up to Tommy Taft's one morning.

"Mr. Brett wants to know if you can fix those barrels to-day? The heads want resetting, and all of 'em want hoops. These two, he says, want two iron hoops apiece, besides the hickory."

"Get away with your barrels! Do you think I'm going to work to-day? No, by Josey—I don't as long as 'I can read my title clear!' It would be just as wicked to work to-day as if it was a Sabby day."

"Why, what's the matter, Uncle Tommy?"

"Matter enough—matter enough! We've got another baby! Old woman's up there now. I'm goin' up to the prospect. Work? Not by a jug-full! Tumble off your barrels! They won't spile afore to-morrow. Where's old Smasher? Come here, old fellow. Let's go up to the doctor's."

From such an address one would look to see some man appear as Uncle Tommy's companion. But it was to his wooden leg that he addressed the endearing epithet of old Smasher.

Tommy Taft was about forty-five years old. A big head he had, round, and bald down to the top of his ears, but at that point, for some reason, the hair refused to retreat, and sprang up with such vigor that it looked like an *abattis;* as if the hair, driven down from the heights, determined to make a stand and fight for its rights. His eyes were small, gray, sunk deeply beneath bold eyebrows, whose hair was wonderfully luxuriant, curling over, and standing out, in immense profusion. A big nose, that hung on his face like an old-fashioned door-knocker, and a wide mouth, completed his portrait, which was framed in by bushy whiskers, carried under his chin, leaving the chin and both lips shorn smooth. His voice was rough and deep, and his manner, of all sorts that ever were found in man, except always a refined manner. He had been a sailor all his long life, and brought inland into this quiet village all the odd and outlandish ways which a sea-faring life, in olden times, was wont to breed.

Why is it that children take to these great shaggy natures, seemingly attracted by those very appearances which would seem likely to repel them? Children act by sympathy. A warm *heart* attracts them, and when once a child's confidence is gained, these rudenesses of person become agreeable, as something out of the common way. It is that element in manners or person, which the heart inspires, that wins children.

Who in the village did not like Tommy? Not a child under fifteen, certainly. His poor old shop and house was the fascination of all the young folks of the village and of the country round. The ground floor was a cooper shop and general tinkering establishment; up stairs were two rooms, plain to rudeness, and as rough in furnishing as if they had been hewed out and fitted by a sailor's axe on a desolate island after a shipwreck, and of as ill-assorted materials as a shipwreck would be apt to cast up. Yet, there was an indescribable air of comfort and peace in the two rooms.

When Uncle Tommy was good natured he seemed always to be comically in sympathy with his wife, in external things. He was always good natured when he was sober. He was sober nearly nine-tenths of his time. When these infrequent moods were on him he was apt to be profane, but never blasphemous or foul. He alternated, during such excesses, between scolding his wife, and religious exercises of various kinds.

"It's as good as a play," said Hiram, "to hear Uncle Tommy when he gets the steam up."

But as soon as he recovered from his aberration, Tommy came down from his height of morality and religion, and became gracious and helpful, with a rough disinterestedness which was quite touching. All the children repaired to him, to have their toys mended, for which he could never be persuaded to take a penny. Boys' knives with broken backs, or blades, or handles, went into hospital with him; their skates and sleds in winter, and their kites, and traps, and gun-locks in summer, were his peculiar charge, and his invariable answer was, "Oh, we mustn't charge children anything." The cheery old fellow was full of quips and pranks, of stories of adventure, drawn from his former seafaring life, or from the full volume of sailors' yarns, which had accumulated in his long years of cruising. While he was willing to take compensation from grown people, he was sure to reject any attempt on the parents' part to requite him by overpayment for his services to their children.

He was known, too, to perform services for those poorer than himself, who were also more helpless. An old black woman who lived by "washing," had fallen sick with rheumatism; Uncle Tommy was heard every evening for a week, sawing away busily at her wood, until he had provided enough for her needs. A gate that had got unhinged, would some morning be found safely tinkered back to its duty.

If a poor creature's bucket was going to pieces, in some mysterious manner it got to itself a new hoop, and the pail was secured again, by a rivet in the ear. The pump-pin was replaced when lost by a new one. These and such like services he delighted to render freely to those who were comparatively helpless.

The jolly old fellow had a wink and a word for everybody, and his passage through the street was celebrated by a stirring, merry out-burst, and to everybody according to his kind.

It was impossible to separate between his humor and earnestness, between conviction and waggery.

Good Parson Buell sometimes visited his shop in the regular rounds of parochial duty, and attempted to talk faithfully with him. Tommy owned every thing—made no resistance—yea, went before the minister and beyond him, in self-accusations.

"Do you not feel that you are a sinner?"

"I know that I am, Parson, a sinner—an awful sinner; and without excuse. I live below my privileges; I don't live up to my light and knowledge. To set under such preachin' as I do, Parson Buell, and not to be better'n I am, is a great sin; and I'm afeerd that I get harder and harder, and that I am puttin' off the day of repentance, and sinnin' away my opportunities, and wastin' my day of grace. It is a surprisin' thing in me! I don't wonder that you are alarmed at my case, Parson. It is a very alarmin' case—I know it is. It has been alarmin' for more'n forty years. I ought to repent, that's sartain! Why shouldn't I? It is well said that it is time for sinners to be surprised in Zion. The rest of the varse too, is very alarmin'. 'Who among us shall dwell with devourin fire, and who among us shall dwell with everlastin' burnings?' It is sartinly time that I should repent of my evil thoughts, and my drinkin', and of my swearin', and of my manifold evil ways and deeds, and I hope, Parson, you will pray for me."

This and such like speeches were not said with the slightest accent of drollery and still less of scoffing. Dr. Buell himself could not have uttered them in a manner more entirely proper. He never seemed in haste to finish the conversation. He would follow the parson to the gate, still descanting on the sinfulness of sin, and admitting every argument, and bringing it home upon himself with such a zeal that Dr. Buell found nothing to do. As the good man left, an indescribable sense of mirth twinkled in Tommy's eyes, and happy was the child that needed his services after a visit from his pastor. He laughed and bubbled over with fun, and contrived some new plaything, or rejoiced the urchin with some queer story, and sent him home happy as a king!

Tommy Taft was always a sailor. Among other notions was that of eating with his sheath-knife, which was an exaggerated jack-knife, with a hole bored in the handle and tied to his belt, which he wore instead of suspenders, by a long yarn or string. At table he would draw out old *Rouser*, as he named it, and refuse any other knife.

Could any contrast be greater than his wife? Gentle, patient, happy, with an undertone of sadness, which was a shadow to the high light; refined in expression, delicate in action. She seemed like a morning glory that had run up on the knots and rugged bark of an oak tree. Whatever rough usage she received at his hands, none ever knew of it from her; whatever discrepancy or uncongeniality there might be between them, there was no sign of it.

Every day, when her home duties were done, Mother Taft slipped forth for an hour to see some person in trouble. She had a remarkable instinct in finding out trouble. Better than a physician or the nurse, she knew who was sick. Better than the clergyman, she knew who was in sorrow. Nor is it extravagant to say, that, better than all these, she knew the art of bringing consolation to those who were in sadness. Whatever the history of her own past life, her victory had made her a leader for others in the dark land.

When Widow Barnes' only boy was brought home dead, flung rom a horse in a drunken race, on a muster-day, the first person who came, after his companions had laid him down, was Mother Taft. All that night she was with her—in silence herself—doing everything, listening to the mother's distracted utterances, keeping away intrusive curiosity; and with exquisite instinct, encouraging her grief, that it might spend itself, and be the sooner comforted.

When Maggie Keech had been turned out of her father's house, it was Mother Taft that went after her, and brought her to her own chamber, and nursed her in her sickness, and when she was again strong enough to work, secured for her, in a neighboring town, a place. Happily, the babe had died.

Go where you would, you would soon meet Mother Taft there, if there was trouble. Like Uncle Tommy, she received wages of the prosperous, but of those in moderate circumstances nothing would she take. She served others for the reason that birds sing, because she loved to; for the reason that dews fall upon flowers, because such is the nature which Heaven gave to her. Born in the air, the dew hides in the day-time, but comes to all things in their night and darkness to deck them in beauty.

How odd that she should ever have married such a man! But they were so utterly unlike that she could not help it. Her peacefulness felt the attraction of his great, boisterous way. Her silence marvelled at his elemental talk, which rained, and blew, and at times burst out into squalls, as if his mouth were the very cave of the winds. Her trustful simplicity admired his shrewdness and penetration of human nature. Her literal soul, that never conceived a jest, nor understood wit or humor, how could it help going to a nature whose every sentence was so balanced that it might be taken either way—earnest or ironical?

In one of these New England villages, there is nothing so original and racy as a great strong nature that dares to say just what it thinks. Common people are restrained by law, by moral teachings, by public sentiment, by interest, by fear. Their real thoughts are smothered, or kept alive in silence. They dare not coin them into words and put them in circulation. They become so used to caution and social conformity, that they cease at length to know how much each man is the echo of the other.

Then comes along a great-footed man, like an elephant, with nothing to gain or lose by men's opinions, and determined to say what he has a mind to.

He runs against custom, throws down the fences, plunges across gardens and fields! If, however, he has a human heart, and at bottom is just and kind, men come to admire his audacity, and to enjoy his blunt speeches, especially if he have great faults. Men's infirmities are the strongest bonds of sympathy. No matter how much better a man is than we, he shall be forgiven if he is also in some things a great deal weaker than we. Uncle Tommy was poor—that was one good fault; he was never "overcome," but sometimes he was "exalted" by strong drink—that was another redeeming fault. Being a sinner, men forgave his liberties!

"No work to-day. Tell old Brett, if he don't like it, to cooper his own barrels! We've got a baby, up at the doctor's. I'm going to put on Smasher, and go up and see how things are gettin' on."

Soon he bolted out upon the street, and, on coming up to the corner, Hiram Beers shouted out across the street:

"Halloo, old Dot-and-Go-One! where are you bound?"

"Better put a snaffle-bit in your mouth, my old jockey, to hold that tongue of yours. They say you opened singin'-school for the crows, Hiram, and they wouldn't come, 'cos it made their voices rough imitating yours—did ye?"

Hiram looked up the street, as if listening to something in the road, and then, with a look of feigned surprise, said:

"Why, I thought I heard a two-hoss wagon runnin' away. Was that your leg, Tommy, making such a rattle? Why don't you ile it? When you go along the street, I should think a hundred cupboard-doors were caught in a gale of wind!"

Having thus exchanged amiable salutations, Hiram came over. "How are you, old customer, anyhow?"

"Jolly as a crew just paid off. Goin' down to see my lady. Old woman been down there for a month—child born two days ago—goin' down to see it."

All the children born under the administration of Mother Taft Tommy considered as belonging to his family, and always spoke of them as his own. A stranger would hear him recount his children with amazement at the extent of his parentage.

A little further on one might have heard, loud enough for deaf man's ears, a new salutation.

"Good morning, Parson Buell, good morning! You're looking well. Study too much, I expect; but ye stand it well. Good sermons ain't drawn up easy as buckets of water! Have to work for 'em. Mighty sermon that, Sunday morning! This old sinner felt it. Says I, 'if there wasn't another soul that knew it, there was two in that audience that knew what a good sermon was, and that was Parson Buell and Tommy Taft!' Am goin' down to Wentworth's. Wouldn't you like to go? I'm not ashamed to be seen walkin' with you! You see, I can get you in. Wouldn't let common folks in so early. But Ma'am Taft, you know, has advantages and will give us a sight."

Then, his voice changing and lowering, he added:

"Parson Buell, it's the unaccountablest thing what the Lord sends children into this world for, considerin' what sort of a place 'tis, and what a time folks have in gettin' thro' it. Lord! They die off like apple-blossoms, half on 'em, afore they're bigger'n mice. And the rest of 'em have a hard time gittin' grown, and when you've got 'em growed, half the folks are paddling round as if they didn't exactly know what they come on airth for; and nobody can tell 'em, for that matter. I never see babies but I think how we used to have birds come aboard ship, way out to sea—landbirds, and *so* tired, poor little things, and hungry. You could go up to 'em and take 'em in your hand, and they turned up their bright eyes with such a piteous look at you, as if they had come from ever so far, and lost their way, and didn't know where they were. Wall, that's about what I think of babies. What do they come off to this 'ere world for? Why don't they stay where they're well off?"

Buell was well used to all Tommy Taft's vagaries, and he had that good sense and tact among men which enabled him to take every one in his own way; so he walked onward with Uncle Tommy to Dr. Wentworth's gate, talking just enough to avoid a conversation.

Uncle Tommy's expectations were fully realized. Though visitors were not yet expected, yet Mother Taft proved a friend at court. Parson Buell had humored queer Tommy Taft, not expecting that he would succeed. When he found himself invited in, he feign would decline. Tommy would not allow it. "Never'll do in the world, Parson; shouldn't have come so far, if you didn't mean to go further. Can't get away now. Must go in if ye're civil."

"But, Taft," said the perplexed worthy, "I have another errand. You must excuse me."

"Parson Buell, you know excuses are dangerous. You shouldn't shirk your duty. Duties never conflict, you said, only Sabby-day morning last. Don't you remember? Hope you don't forget your own sermons, Parson. That's other folks' business."

And so, like a slow ship with a tug pulling away at its side, Buell found himself, half laughing and half vexed, ushered in by Tommy under circumstances slightly inclining to the ludicrous.

The babe was brought down by Mother Taft, Agate Bissell following. She was now again housekeeper, as she had been prime minister to Mrs. Wentworth ever since her arrival in Norwood. For, in this tall, slender New-England woman, she discerned from the first, an amount of energy, conscientious fidelity, and real affection, which paid a thousand times over for the inconveniences arising from her hard manner, her inflexible precision, and her despotic regularity.

Tommy seized the babe from his wife's arms, and fairly danced with delight. He chuckled, and chirruped, and Ho-ho'd, as if his reason had left him. Rough as he was, no nurse ever held a babe more tenderly and dextrously.

But when he suddenly thrust it upon Parson Buell, who was talking with stately Agate Bissell, the good minister held it in his hands as if it was something which he dared not drop and could not hold.

"Why, what's the matter?" said Tommy, "is it hot that ye are so awkward about it?"

Mother Taft came to his relief, and the good minister, leaving messages of kindness, was glad to get away from the office of a nurse, and, full as much, from the officious humor of Tommy Taft, who, however, followed him to the very door.

"A good baby, Parson, but come to a poor world—a sinful world. If it had known what's good for itself, it had better staid away. P'rhaps it wern't asked about it! Very likely. But we must make the best on't now."

Turning back from the door, Uncle Tommy found Agate Bissell ready to express her mind.

"Taft, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. You stick to that good man like a burr. You've no more respect for your betters than a bull has for good manners."

"What now, Miss Bissell?" said Taft, with an innocent and injured look; "would you have me run away from the minister?"

"No—but you had no need to make a nurse of him, and make him feel ridiculous with this baby in his arms."

"He *did* look ridiculous, didn't he?" said Tommy, with a joyous acquiescence.

"Of course he don't know how to tend babies. If it had been a book he could have handled it, I warrant ye."

"What a pity," said Uncle Tommy, with a very sober air, "that babies weren't born like books. Then they wouldn't trouble anybody—could put 'em up on a shelf, have 'em always dry—take 'em down when you want to use 'em—never grow any bigger—no trouble to anybody."

"What do you know about 'em?" said Agate, with great precision. "Children are from the Lord, and they come on his errands and in such manner as pleases him. And it don't please him to send them by *men*. Naturally, a baby is a woman's care, and men are always awkward about such things. Everything in its place."

"But don't you think, Miss Bissell, that if they come on the Lord's arrants, they forget what they come for, afore they get far along? If the Lord's got any arrants, seems to me he ought to send something better 'n these little creeturs, that keep two or three folks busy the best part of their time for two or three years, and then die off their hands."

"It's a pity that a baby didn't die about the time you were small," said Agate Bissell, straightening up, and turning somewhat scornfully away from Tommy to his wife, who, good soul, sat quietly by, as if the conversation was merely a little wind out of the window, whistling through the sweet brier bushes.

"There'd have been lots of crying and sobbin' if I had died young," said Uncle Tommy, with a wink at his antagonist.

Nothing ever provoked Agate Bissell so much as one of Uncle Tommy's winks. She deigned neither a word nor a look—but walked out of the room, pale and straight as a candle, and as if she thought that with her all the light would go out too.

Mother Taft mildly expostulated. "Father, what do you love to provoke her for? She's *so* good."

"I'd as lief tend flowers with a crowbar as to have one of them old maids about with little babies. I wonder she don't take the little creetur in her work-bag and walk off to prayer meetin' with it! You need to watch her, mother, or she'll bile down a catechism instead of mint or catnip, when the child has wind."

And with that he insisted on another look at Rose, who lay sleeping as unconscious of all this whir of talk, as a rosebud in March, hidden deep in the bush, is of the rough winds. The old man really looked beautiful as he gazed on the child, and his face seemed to catch something of the purity and brightness of childhood.

How strangely such a tender spot appears in an old, rude nature like Tommy's. Rough in speech, audacious in manner, a non-conformist to all the customs of society, yet, for children, showing a rich and wonderful love, that cast its light over all his faults, and left something of beauty upon them!

So an old oak tree—too old for acorns, too old for leaves, almost dead, rugged and vast, yet bears up on its shaggy branches bunches of vivid green mistletoe most beautiful—rejoicing as if decay and death were better to it than life.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SOBER CHAPTER.

For months little Rose lay sleeping for the greatest part of the time, folded up in the finest wool, waking into good nature for an hour and then gently sinking back into the land of sleep and dreams. The doctor came often to the unconscious little creature, as she lay upon Mother Taft's lap, and gazed upon her in silence and deep thought, as if he expected some revelation from her face. He waited for signs of intelligence as one waits for a star to arise.

"She is a rose indeed, Doctor," said Mother Taft—"is she not?"

"A moss-rose, if you call these blankets the moss, and its face like the tiny bud in which no color yet begins to appear."

"Ah, well, children don't come up blossom first like hyacinths, and that great red amaryllis. They are like laylocks and honeysuckles, that grow a year or two before they get a place for blossoms to stand on."

And with that the good dame brought up the blanket about the baby's face like a hood, kissing the little red lips, which, by the way, she did with every operation, as if kisses were pins, to hold fast each plait and fold and tuck.

As the child began to dawn into consciousness more and more, the father's spirit seemed to hover about her, waiting, like one before a door, for some one to come forth. As the summer warmed, she was often carried by him upon short rides.

"I am expecting, my dear," said his wife, "that one of these days you will prescribe that child to some patient, instead of medicine."

"She is food and medicine to me, at any rate. I have two lives now."

"Ah, and then you do not count me?"

"Certainly—you and I count one, and Rose makes two."

A vast elm grew upon the eastern side of his dwelling, not far from a clear brook, which made its way from the hills down through the meadows to the Connecticut river. On this rich soil and near a copious supply of water, which the elm so much loves it had become one of those immense domes of which almost every New-England village has one at least, but in which Norwood was peculiarly rich. The huge trunk rose some fifteen feet before dividing, and then sent off a number of separate stems, each one of which might, if alone, constitute a large tree. These, still subdividing, at last spread out into a vast concave, and the pendulous branches, with graceful curves, returning on every side, like a network of cords wound around with green leaves, almost swept the ground. Under this vast cope, whose top was full of sunlight, while cool shadows lay upon the ground, the doctor loved to sit, when days of leisure gave him rest, and especially upon summer Sunday afternoons, with Rose lying upon his lap—or both of them upon the ground, she on a blanket and he upon the grass.

It was there, on a bright Wednesday in July, when Rose was now more than a year old, that Parson Buell found him in the garden watching the child. Birds overhead were flying from branch to branch, or conferring in a familiar way about household matters, coquetting or whirling forth in love wrangles, while a vireo in the topmost tuft, quite hidden, sat singing by the half-hour its perpetual melody, whistled in phrases and recurring bits like short sentences in a music lesson.

They fell into discourse about the child; then about the origin of the soul, the minister affirming that nothing definite could be found in the Bible respecting it, and that learned divines had been exercised in mind and divided in opinions about it. The doctor said that no light had been thrown upon it in the researches of physiologists. For himself, he had a constitutional horror of the notion that the mind was material, came with the body, as a rose with the bush, and died with the body, as a flower with its stem. In the long gradations of creation matter grew to finer and finer organization and subtler uses, but there came a point at which it touched something higher than itself, spiritual existence, not to be known by the senses—which can only act in their own province of matter—but to be discerned by the soul, which could recognize its own existence, and had intuition of the spiritual element in creation.

"It is remarkable, Doctor, that you, a physiologist, should incline to the spiritual faith, while Judge Bacon, of sound education and not given to the physical sciences, should hold, as I suspect he does, the physical theory of mind."

"Judge Bacon has no *ideality*. Imagination is the very marrow of faith."

"But you have often told me that I had no ideality—whatever that may mean. How is it that the deficiency does not work in the same direction in both cases?"

"It does. You may differ in regard to facts and convictions, but both of you insist upon reducing all truth to some material equivalent before you are subject to conviction. A truth which does not admit of a logical statement, seems to you a phantasy. You believe not upon any evidence in your spirit, but upon the semi-material form which language and philosophical statements give to thought. The further you can bring a truth from its spiritual condition, and the more nearly it is incarnated, the more satisfactory is to you the evidence of its existence. But, with me, I accept facts which appeal to my senses as the lowest possible truth, and as appealing to the lowest avenue of my mind. Nature is more than a vast congeries of physical facts, related to each other as cause and effect, and signifying nothing else."

"What is signified, then, in your theory?"

"I have no theory. I have an irregular and fitful conviction that there are great truths of the affections seeking an inlet upon men, which flow from God, and which reach men, rightly sensitive, through the doings and appearances of what we call Nature."

"Pray give me an inkling, Doctor; for if you can get more from nature than I do, perhaps you can teach me how to help myself in the same way."

"Look at Rose, Dr. Buell, with her hand full of dandelions. Don't you see that a beam of sunlight has struck through the leaves, and is pouring gold on the child's head? See her wink, and puzzle, the darling!"

"What does that sunlight mean to her?"

"Nothing, except to her skin; and there it means trouble and annoyance. But to you and to me, it means beauty. It lies speckling all the ground around her. It moves with the leaves as if it had a life of its own. It kindles beauty out of homeliness itself but by touching it."

"What then?"

"There is more meaning in sunlight than a child knows, or can know."

"More meaning? That is, I suppose, there are *effects* which the child does not notice or appreciate."

"Do you believe that the sunlight can produce any effect not provided for in its original constitution? You believe that God created it. Did he not know and design every element, and every effect?"

"Surely: surely I believe it."

"Of course you believe it, in a general and abstract manner. Look through these evergreens! See that clump of hollyhocks, white on yellow, and rose on crimson, so they stand, and the light falls on them alone, through that opening among the trees. They are transfigured! The light seems to palpitate upon them, and on the crimson blossom it fairly trembles! Is that all mere materiality? Is there no moral around them?"

"You don't mean that a hollyhock is a moral and accountable being? It is an unreasoning and unconscious thing, acted upon, but not acting."

"Hold! Does it not act? Does it not send sheets of light to my eyes? Does not that raise up a thousand fancies and yearnings? Do I not, in its exquisite effects, almost see through matter, and into the other life? And is not that clump, with its atmosphere of light, the instrument producing such effects? And when God created light and flowers, did he not know what power it was possible that they could exert upon human souls, and design that they should do it? They have a moral function, even if they have no moral *nature!*"

"I understand you, doctor. You hold that there are two kinds of moral agents—one conscious and voluntary, and the other unconscious and involuntary. But how many do you suppose in this town, besides yourself, ever saw or thought of such things in a hollyhock bush? It is mere fancy. It is not sober fact."

"Fancy is itself a fact, just as much as an argument, a leaf or a stone. God made the soul to be played upon by its fellows, by the whole round of visible nature, by invisible things, and more than all, by Himself. If shaking leaves stir up the soul, there was a power in them to do it, as much as in the soul to be agitated! I insist on a living, divine power in physical things. Why should men be so anxious to degrade nature? Is it unsafe to believe that God's eye follows every sparrow, and that his taste unrolls every flower, and that his feelings have an alphabetic expression in all natural forms, harmonies, colors, contrasts and affinities?"

"But if this were so, would there be so few even of educated men who derive any influence from those things?"

"I will answer you by asking: If the Bible is God's word, declaring his counsel, as we both believe, would there, out of ten hundred million people on the globe, be less probably than a hundred million that derive a single influence from it? In both cases, eyes have they, but they see not."

For a long time, Dr. Buell sat silent and thoughtful. Had it been a logical statement or the true meaning of a line of Scriptural texts, he would have been full of resources of argument. But, deficient in imagination, and trained to reject it in all investigations as an element of error, he yet could not but perceive that Dr. Wentworth, by its ministration, found in Nature a ground for religious faith which he did not, while at the same time he reverently accepted and eminently exemplified the teachings of the New Testament.

He rose and walked for a few moments along the edges of the shadow, where the gold sunlight and the leaf-shadows played a game of reprisals, back and forth, taking and retaking the ground from each other with noiseless conflict, until he had compassed the circuit of the great elm.

"Doctor, there may be something in your views. When you state them they strike me as having substance; but when I attempt of myself to think of them, they melt in my hands. When you say that natural objects have moral ends, you do not mean that they constitute a part of the commands, motives, and intelligent duties included in moral government?"

"I surely believe that they supplement these things. Physical laws are divine commands, and so far they are a part of moral government. Whatever affects a man's soul is, for the time being, a moral influence. The advent of Christ may be a more august and immensely more fruitful influence than the breaking forth of a lily from the ground; but when our Saviour said, 'Behold, the lilies!' lilies were ordained to act a part in morals."

"Do you think that a flower, in and of itself, has any moral meaning?"

"Do you think that words, in and of themselves, have any signification? Words mean whatever they have the power to make us think of when we look on them. Flowers mean what sentiment they have the power to produce in us. The image which a flower casts upon a sensitive plate is simply its own self-form; but, cast upon a more sensitive human soul, it leaves there not mere form, but feeling, excitement, suggestion. God gave it power to do that, or it would not have done it."

"Is not this mysticism, Doctor, rather than common sense? I confess that I perceive in plants a relation to matter, to my senses, and to practical uses; but when you make them preach or teach, or do duty as moralists, unless you mean it in a metaphorical way, I am puzzled."

"Yonder is my bed of hyacinths, now out of blossom, and filled up between their rows are my tiger flowers, yellow and red, every day and all summer blossoming, or they *would* blossom if the moles did not eat up the bulbs at such a fearful rate. These underground radicals! you can hardly rid a garden of them, when once they become numerous and neighborly. No matter about that. What I was going to say was, that I consider a mole's opinion of the structures and uses of my hyacinths to be very much like—well, excuse me,—like most folks' notions of moral truth! The moles see the bottom and nothing else. Imagine a mole forming a philosophical theory of my bulbs. In mole's language, whatever that is, he would say: 'A hyacinth is a vegetable creation put underground for the benefit of moles. It is round, of a sweetish taste, quite juicy, and wholesome for moles. It has been held by some moles that a hyacinth has an existence above ground, and speculatists have gone so far as to say that this root is only a kind of starting point, while the best part of the plant is above ground. But there is no evidence of that, and it is doubtless a vagary of the imagination.'"

The minister could not help laughing at this fable.

"I admit so much of this," said he, "that truths may have only their bulbs in this world, and their stems and blossoms higher up: but, even so, how are we to know anything about these fragrant blossoms if they *are* in another medium, and above our reach of investigation?"

"The first step toward knowing is to be conscious of not knowing. If truth can be sufficiently learned through our senses, we shall take no further pains, and be content with a little, as if it were the whole."

"But admit, Doctor, that nature is full of some hidden meanings, as you call them, how will you detect them? How will you distinguish between a mere fancy and a substantial reality?"

"Is a thought necessarily any truer than an imagination? Is a thought anything but the impression produced upon a faculty by a certain kind of truth? Is not an imagination the impression produced upon another faculty by another kind of truth? Is not sight as much a sensation as hearing? And is not the report of one faculty to be taken for truth, each in its kind, as much as that of another?

"It takes five senses to report to us all the qualities of matter. It takes twice as many mental faculties to determine all the properties and relations of a truth. Knowledge is (like white light) that condition of mind which is produced at the point where all the faculties on which a truth falls join their reports."

"And so you would regard the imagination as needful to a scientific investigation?"

"No man without imagination can by any possibility be an acute observer, nor a sound reasoner even upon physical facts, still less upon truths which involve some mental qualities."

"Do you think, then, that poets are our best philosophers, theologians, legists, and *savans*?"

"There is scarcely a great poet who would not have been eminent as philosopher or theologian. There is not one theologian or philosopher in history who had not in him the elements of a poet. And he is indebted for fame to those very elements of poetry. His special dogmas may have perished from out of men's belief. But the great truths of emotion, expressed with poetic feeling, live on. This is the universal and immortal part. No man can *express* the great truths of human life without employing all his moral and æsthetic nature. No man ever delivers great truths worthily without rising into eloquence and even into poetry."

"What do you understand to be the difference between prose, eloquence and poetry?"

"Prose is the work-day dress in which truths do secular duty

Poetry is the robe, the royal apparel, in which truth asserts its divine origin. Prose is truth looking on the ground; eloquence is truth looking up to heaven; poetry is truth flying upward toward God!"

"Your version is itself poetic, but not philosophical. You give me a picture, not a discrimination and definition."

"Well, common prose is the language of the intellectual faculties, acting without ideality. When you add the fire and figures which the imagination inspires, it is eloquence. If now you give it musical qualities, in time, flow, and rhyme, it is poetry. Or, again, when human truths are spoken as they exist in their physical relations, that is prose, science, or whatever you choose to call it. Add now the element of inspiration, raise the same truths into the light of those faculties which are distinctively spiritual and divine, and you have poetry, and this is the highest form of good sense, or reason in its nobler sphere."

"Apply this criticism, Doctor, to your notions of flowers and scenery."

"It scarcely needs it. It is not poetry to say that that part of universal life which belongs to the vegetable kingdom has a moral relation to human beings, proved by the effects which it has shown itself capable of producing on fine natures, and for which, it is strictly philosophical to infer, they were adapted. That so few perceive it, or experience it consciously, is no more a presumption against its nature and proper uses than the indifference of mankind to the movements of the planets is evidence that our seasons do not arise from stellar revolutions."

"Doctor, I cannot fairly say that I believe your notions, or even understand them. They give you great comfort. You are far happier than I am. I do not know as that is, however, any presumption in your favor."

"I *am* happy—exceedingly happy. One condition of it is, of course, perfect physical health. The body is like a piano, and happiness is like music. It is needful to have the instrument in good order. But that is but a beginning. Something must play upon the instrument. And *who* performs, and from what musical score, will determine the character of the concert. Chickering's grandest grand piano, with a fool playing jigs on it, is not so good as an old harpsichord with Beethoven at the keys."

"Go on—make your application."

"Well, to be plain, I do not think that you are happy, because it does not seem to me that you hold converse with those truths which insure happiness. Your God is historic—mine is living. Your God is in a temple—mine every where. You have excogitated and built up, element by element, attribute by attribute, a conception of God, to which by resolute concentration you direct your thoughts, without help in symbol, natural object, or any instrument whatever, but wholly by will-force. Now and then there will arise out of this stretching void some dim image or sense of Divinity. But even at that your conscience, not love, clothes Him. You have little help from your affections; less from ideality; none from taste and beauty; and, really, you worship an *abstract thought*—a mere projection of an *idea*—not a whole Mind, a *Living Being!* You and I worship the same Being, and agree in the main as to the moral elements which glow in His nature; but we differ practically in our way of reaching Him."

"I find God in Christ the Saviour. I seek Him in prayer, in meditation, and in His Word."

"Thus do I also. But not so only. By the light of His Word I seek Him, in a living form, outside of His Word. God is revealed in Christ as a man. Now, whatever in man or child, in their noblest moments, when their fervent affection upon some unselfish inspiration breaks forth into unusual and ethereal forms, seems to me more than a suggestion of divinity. I see flashing from these experiences the very feeling of God. Thus I can interpret Scripture with vivid insight. There is a perpetual commentary upon the New Testament running through human life, and you are afraid to read it!

"But besides the endless interpretations which the human soul is unfolding, the whole natural world is full of those very truths and meanings of which I was speaking a little while ago. Sounds and silences, color, forms, the life of insect and animal, and the endless play of cause and effect, I accept first, as scientific facts, with certain scientific relations. Or to speak exactly, I accept the report which they make to my perceptive reason. But they create in my breast, besides all that, such heights and depths of sensibility that I know that they have a moral relation to my moral sentiments, and that while science, like the mole, knows the root and bulb, faith alone, acting in a spiritual sphere, recognizes the developed stem and blossoms."

Although Dr. Wentworth's manner was usually quiet, almost producing an impression of indifference and impassiveness, he had, during this conversation, grown very earnest. Every lineament of his large, pale face glowed, and his eyes exchanged their dreamy look for one that almost flashed visible light, as he rose and stood before his minister, straightening up his body to its full height and said:

"Dr. Buell, do you believe the Scriptures? Do you believe that those very heavens above your head declare the glory of God; or only that they *did*, four thousand years ago? 'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein!'—now, to-day, here in this field—yonder, over that meadow, just as much as in Palestine. 'Thou crownest the year—Thou visitest the earth—Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice. The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth king forevermore!'

"Do you think that I can *believe* this universal presence of God—in the sun, in the seasons, in the sea and on the mountains, in tree and herb, in clouds and storm, in summer and harvest, in the city among men and in the wilderness,—and yet suppose that Nature has nothing more for the soul than the catalogue of scientific names and a recitation of the order in which phenomena happen? Is there nothing of God in flowers, in forests, in birds, in insects, in my poor garden, in yonder valley, along the mountain-flank, in those thunder-heads looming up white over the horizon yonder? or is all this only meaningless matter? When my wife speaks to me, is it only sound—wind? or is it a movement of air upon my ear, that conveys to my heart deep meanings? And is Nature mere phenomena? or is it God's phenomena, meant to convey something deeper than the body catches—something for the soul? Why, then, should you, a minister of God, hunt through books for God, and stand in pity of me, who use the Bible as would a Botany—which does not contain living plants, but only word-descriptions of them. If I would see the plant itself, I must go out of the book to nature. And the Bible cannot contain the truth itself, only the *word-forms*, the lettered symbols of truth

God does not live in a book. Man does not live in a book. Love, Faith, Joy, Hope, do not, cannot live in a book. For the living truth we must go outside of the Bible, which is but to religion what a Botany is to gardens, meadows, and all their flowers! I am not ashamed to own that I feel as if some sort of positive relationship existed between me and every living thing. A spice bush, a clump of wild azaleas, a bed of trailing arbutus, a patch of eye-brights, a log covered with green moss,—these all seem to be of my family kin. The spiders, too, the crickets, the field-mice, and all the swarms of birds; the worm—that as a child I was taught to abhor—are of God's family and mine. Since I accepted the New Testament, all the world has become my Bible. My Saviour is everywhere—in the book and out of the book. I see Him in Nature, in human life, in my own experience as well as in the recorded fragments of His own history. I live in a Bible. But it is an unbound book! It is wider than that I can reach its bounds. It is enough for me that I believe when it is said, 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.'"

Dr. Buell walked slowly homeward, as one who saw nothing but his own thoughts. To all who found fault with the rigor of his teachings, and the remorseless logic with which he pushed "the doctrines" that, to him, were the very soul and marrow of life, it might be replied—the children and the poor loved him! What says such a fact? This: That he had a deep and tender heart; that while his head was like the granite rocks that crop out of the sides of the hill, his heart was like the nooks and hollows between, in which soil deep and rich had collected. The figure might be further pressed; for, as berry-bearing vines, growing in the rich mould, climb up over the rock, and cover its grim face with a veil of comeliness, so out of the heart, full often, grow forth affections and sympathies that go far to hide the severe beliefs of the head. In his pulpit, Dr. Buell, a man of earnest conscience, clear logical intellect, narrow in his range of thought, but intense along those lines,—was jealous of the Faith. He would not accommodate it. He would not make it soft or beautiful. "The truth should be as a drawn sword. Men are in danger every hour and moment! How dare I spend my time in etching pleasing pictures on the blade, when God sends me to swing it over their heads as a flashing threat?"

But when he came among the sick and the poor, when consolation was the duty, his soul seemed to seek relief and compensation for the stern fulfilment of his intellectual duties. Children, too, found his smile sweet, and his ways most companionable. To be sure, he thought, they were involved in a common ruin; but the evil, though in the germ, had not yet greatly developed itself. He used to say: "There is no moral virtue in children's innocence and simplicity, but they are pleasing to our natural susceptibilities, and may be enjoyed as we relish food, or odors."

On this homeward walk, however, the good man was shut up in himself. Cherub—the blackest of all black boys—threw a cartwheel two several times, in his most accomplished manner, without attracting the slightest attention. A little girl, five years old, stood in the crack of Judge Mason's gate, and held out her little hands full of dog-fennel to him, as if it had been a flower of far more attractive fragrance, and wondered at him that he passed without a word or gesture. Not till a curly-haired boy bounced out of the door yard of his own home, glad to get into the street, on the plea of seeing *papa*, did he wake to external things.

CHAPTER IX.

AGATE BISSELL.

Agate Bissell was the stern child of a severe experience. Her father was poor, and would have been industrious but for an unfortunate habit of drinking. Her mother was a woman of decision, of pride of character, of high moral feeling, but subject from childhood to hard work, with only a little education. She grew up a kind of patient warrior against trouble. She had known trouble from childhood. Poverty before and poverty after her marriage, were but minor evils. She had seven children. The third child, but first-born daughter, was Agate. No where except in New England could she have been called *Agate*. Her mother was an earnest reader of the Bible. In her continual troubles she resorted to it, literally as to a refuge. Isaiah above all writers had fired her imagination. There was something in the hopefulness of the stern prophet amidst abounding troubles that seemed peculiarly congenial to her. In particular she dwelt upon the fifty-fourth chapter; so often had she read it, so often had she stayed her sorrow on its exultant promises, that it had come to seem like a voice sounding out specially for her, and had her own name appeared in it she would scarcely have been surprised.

Here had she read, till they mingled with her waking and sleeping thoughts, those words of sublime consolation! Naturally high-minded and sensitive, every aspiration had been almost crushed. Her husband, a good-natured man, could not be redeemed from his cups, and to her proud spirit it seemed as if she were bound to a dead body. Awful thoughts sometimes rose up in her, a horror of temptation, which sent her flying to her chamber for prayer and scripture, like a dove flying from before a swift-pursuing hawk Then she would read: "For thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. * * * For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit. * * * For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee."

On some days the clouds came low down, and there was no horizon of hope. Her little children were hungry, her husband drunk, her own strength giving way, and all the future like an on-coming storm. Then she would read, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee! O, thou afflicted! tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold! I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of AGATES, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

This touched to the quick. For her husband there remained only the sentiment of duty. But all her garnered and wounded affections were poured forth upon her children. If by a living death she could save them, and gain a firm foothold for each of them in honorable life, she would willingly have died deaths daily.

In her poor little dwelling, it may be supposed, were no luxuries. No picture, no print so big as her baby's hand, hung on the wall. She knew no rest, no amusement. Her whole being was a concentrated purpose to bring up her children so that their life should be happier than hers had been. For that, the sun shone —for that, summer and winter came—for that. the Sabbath inserted a seventh golden link in the iron chain of toil—for that, the whole world existed to her, and time itself drew on its train of days and nights! On her feet, in work, wrestling against poverty; —on her knees, in prayer, wrestling against temptations and despair, she reared her children, hoping in them at last to find an end of sorrow and a beginning of joy.

When Agate was just born, she looked upon the babe with anguish. She seemed to see all her own miseries stored up for this child. She almost felt a pang of guilt for bringing another woman into life to take a place in that long procession of sufferers, of which women have constituted the largest proportion. She hardly wished to look in her face. Long before the minister sprinkled this little new-comer, her mother had baptized her with tears.

As soon as she could sit up, (and the poor recover from the birth of children sooner than the prosperous. A rigorous nurse art thou, oh Poverty!—a stern physician, and, though skilful, bitter cruel!) weak, sad, alone, except her little children, her days were darker than any thing but the nights. There was little difference in the twenty-four hours, except that the night was darkness plagued with dreams, and the day was darkness plagued with gloomy thoughts. The first day that she could read, her oldest boy brought her well-worn Bible to her. It opened of itself to her favorite chapter. The leaves there were like a travelled road Let the book fall open a hundred times, and every time it would open at the same place. Then she read: "*I will make thy windows agates.*" A window is that by which light comes through upon our inward darkness, or by which we look out of darkness into light. If a window of God is made of agate, then, she thought, an agate must be something more clear and beautiful than glass. What agate was she knew not, but it must needs be something glorious and hopeful. "*And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord.*" That was the very anguish-longing of her heart! She seemed to have it borne in upon her that children are the Lord's windows, through which mothers look forth out of pain and darkness into hope and happiness! She seized the happy thought: "I will call her Agate. Perhaps the Lord will make her like a window to my darkness." Thus was the child named.

We smile at names. We weigh them in the scale of the ear for sweetness or smoothness. We cull some, we reject others. We laugh at men's odd and awkward names, and quite justly too, it may be; since capricious whims, and vagrant fancies, or mere carelessness, so often select them. But sometimes a name is a history. It is like a pictured vase. We see the figures without thinking in what furnace those colors were fastened, and by what fire the glazing was fused. Is there in any history a record of the heart more touching and simple than that of old? "And it came to pass as Rachel's soul was departing, for she died, that she called his name Ben-oni"—Son of my Sorrow.

Growing up in such circumstances, it may well be supposed that Agate's life was one which would bring her to more acquaintance with work and vigor of duty, than with those lighter graces which commonly belong to prosperous childhood.

With as much natural conscience as her mother, she had a less intense pride. She could not sympathize with that shuddering horror at her father's presence, which her mother, with all her struggles, could never subdue. Agate stood between them, loving both, and was indeed a medium—a window—through which each looked upon the other, colored with the hues of the medium.

When at thirteen years of age, her father died—unreformed, stupefied—Agate really mourned. Her mother saw the turf placed upon his grave without a tear. Her soul said, God hath avenged me! For years, the mother and children struggled on. Agate, besides daily work, had, as it were, carried away captive a certain amount of education. No one but he who has tried it knows what power of learning there is, in a mind every faculty of which is tensely strained with desire and necessity. She read with eyes that pierced. What she read was as if it had been burned in. At seventeen, she taught the summer school in her neighborhood. Her brothers were her care at home as well. At twenty-two, the mother went to her rest. On the last day of her life her mind wandered back to her brief hours of early joy. She half-spake and half-whispered some fondling words, as if she were a girl in the days of courtship and love. Then, after a little, the life-long grief seemed again to overshadow her. " Agate—Agate—He's come. Put him to bed. Oh God ! " She dozed for an hour. When, after a time, Agate looked upon her mother, her eyes were opened wide, as if she beheld new and strange things. In a low and sweet voice she said : " Yes—I am coming." Before the sun went down, she had departed, and her troubled day was over.

Agate Bissell was respected by all her neighbors. Her common sense, her energy, her truth—clear as crystal—her strong moral nature, would have made her a remarkable woman anywhere. She was not handsome by regularity of features; but she had what was better—the open and strong face of a sensible and kind-hearted woman. There was that in her face which one would not willingly see kindled. Her power of indignation was terrible. Young Templeton found that out. He had paid attention to Agate. Good-looking, capable of working, his father's dissipation and example had not acted upon his self-indulgent nature as a like sad example had upon the sterner soul of Agate.

Yet a certain sympathy she had felt for him, from a somewhat similar experience of their lives. Her heart, bound around with cords of restraint, should it once go free and love, would seek its mate as eagles fly.

It might have been. It never was. One evening he waited upon her to a meeting in Norwood. The way was long,—not too long for them. When they reached the village Agate's step was light. Her face had lost something of its intensity. The light of gentle feelings rested upon it.

They returned home that night, Tom Templeton and Agate Bissell. Afterward they never again spoke to each other. What the history was neither ever said—he for shame, and she from scorn. For years his name kindled upon her face a look so stern and deep in moral indignation, that one would not willingly look upon it. That was the end of her dream of youth. When at thirty she assumed the care of Dr. Wentworth's house, not a tongue in all Norwood dared even in sport to say that the doctor had a young housekeeper. One had better play with fire than with her name. And yet, under this strong-featured, pale face, who can tell what stores of love were lying, like gold undug, in fields over which the plough runs and vulgar harvests wave, because no one suspects the gold below or knows how to extract the treasure!

CHAPTER X.

DR. WENTWORTH'S MANSION

We take shame to ourselves for having never asked our friends into the Doctor's house, but left them, inhospitably, to wander about Norwood as best they might. Not that they are in danger of lacking accommodations; for Norwood is not unaccustomed to company. Hither come hundreds every summer for the pleasure of its wholesome air and the beauty of its charming scenery. There is no lack of hospitable hotels; nor are the landlords unskilled in catering. For all that, our readers had a right to expect an invitation to the Doctor's house; and as the whole family are off to-day on a pic-nic, we will steal in and look over the whole place. This intrusion would be exceedingly rude in actual life; but in books such things are often done, and may be again; and if any complaint arises, I will take the blame.

Approach the old fashioned mansion through the front yard. First take notice of the roof. The ancient New-England architects seem to have had a vague idea of a *Mansard* roof. As the attempt was carried out in the case before us, it resulted very nearly in justifying Hiram Beers' saying that the Doctor's roof looked like an old woman's cap, with spectacles mounted on it; for two windows projected from the steep double-leaved roof in a manner that invariably suggested a pair of great eyes! And as there was an open, ornamental railing carried along the eaves and up the gables of the roof, resembling a stiff ruffle, the notion of an old lady's cap and frill once hinted could not be got out of the mind.

The front yard was deep. A straight path led to the front door. On either side of it was a border of shrubs, with intermediate spaces filled with flowers.

A porch of some architectural pretension bestrid the front door, and was itself at once a protection from rain and a trellis for honeysuckles.

The windows on either side were small, if compared with modern windows, and filled with glass that seemed even more diminutive.

No mean little entry receives you, as is too often the case in modern houses. The hall of a dwelling gives you the first impressions. Sometimes on entering you fear that by some mistake you have got into a clothes closet; at others, you enter upon a space so small that it is only by a dexterous interchange of civilities between yourself and the door that you can get in or the door be shut. In some halls, so called, a man sees a pair of corkscrew stairs coming right down upon him, and fears lest by some jugglery he be seized and extracted like a cork into some upper space. Often the doors are so arranged that what with the shutting of the outside door, and the opening of inside ones, the timid stranger stands a chance of being impaled on the latch, or flapped front and rear; for, vigorous springs attached to the doors work with such nimbleness that one needs to be expert, or, having opened the door, before he can dash through it will spring back on him with a "now-I've-got-you" air quite alarming.

Such houses seldom remit their torments here. There is an exquisite symmetry in all the interior adaptations. You finish your visit and rise to depart, taking the door most likely to let you out, and find yourself walking into a sweet-meat closet!

A young beau, having acquitted himself well of the last critical sentences, and executed a half-backward, and wholly awkward march toward the door, with ineffable satisfaction, opens and steps into the china closet! The little girls giggle; the little boys laugh out; the young ladies are confused, and the beau still more so. But, what if it had been the cellar door? On one occasion, visiting a thrifty friend whose dining-room and sitting-room were one, I came near descending headlong into his cellar, which, for convenience probably, opened into the dining-room. I once saw three like and equal doors in a sitting room. The one was the true door of departure; the next, the cellar; and the third a bedroom. There was only one chance in three for a stranger.

Do you not think that a house reveals the architect's disposition? I do. We know much of a writer from his style. The style of a cautious nature will have involved parenthetical sentences, full of qualifications and limitations. An open and imperious disposition is shown in short sentences, direct and energetic. A secretive and proud mind is cold and obscure in style. An affectionate and imaginative nature pours out luxuriantly, and blossoms all over with ornaments.

The same is true with artists who really deserve the name They paint what they see and feel, and it is this self-part that gives the style. Some subtle part of every man's own spirit goes with his work, is incarnated in it, and gives to it that undiscoverable something which marks and discriminates one artist from another. And so, every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures.

Why should not the architect, then, transfuse into his work something of *his* nature, too? Every house has an expression. Every room has a disposition. Some houses are precisionists. They are pinched and crimped, and you almost expect to see a starched ruffle and white apron on them. Others are generous and hospitable. Every time you look at them they seem to say: "Why don't you come in? I am waiting for you." Some dwellings are stately and dignified, and some are cosy and jolly. Every day I see houses that cannot repress their scorn at beggarly houses in their neighborhood! The door has an excluding air. The windows are supercilious, and the very cornice has a curl of well-bred contempt. But it is in the interior of men and houses, that the real disposition must be found. The moment you enter some dwellings, your heart cries out spontaneously, "Peace be within thy walls." There is a charm upon the threshold, a joy in every room. Not a minute of the day do the apartments cease to breathe upon your ear, You are welcome! But, shiver as I do, when you enter as I do, this selfishness in brick and mortar! The architect was a mean and narrow soul, I know! His ceilings are only fifteen feet high. I wonder he did not go on up with them till they were as high as he felt himself to be above common men. What a good ice house this would make! What repulsion is in these walls! As you stand upon the threshold, the whole hall stares at you, and says, in white plaster, "Well, what do you want here?"

All such fears are banished as you enter Dr. Wentworth's old-fashioned mansion. A hall twelve feet wide opens its arms to welcome you. On its sides hang large maps. Toward the farther end rises a flight of stairs six feet wide. They say to you, plain a words can speak, "Do not weary yourself." The short rise an oroad tread suggest ease. And six or eight steps being taken, the stairs seemed to have changed their mind and concluded to stop there. For, a landing some eight feet wide ran across the whole width of the hall. And the space was still further augmented by a large bow-window, circling out backward, which the Doctor had built and filled with colored glass. Only at the other end of this landing did the stairs consent to start upward again. Perched between the two stories, a grand look-out was thus furnished for summer;—the window on the one side, and the lower hall and upper hall on the other—giving to the eye ample command of all that was going on. In summer it was a favorite resort; and in winter the blaze of colored light always gave a kind of sunrise cheer to the hall.

Midway in the lower hall a grand, old-fashioned, ebony-cased clock, standing on the floor, reached up to the ceiling. It was not only a time-keeper of hours, but of days and months. Its sable vesture, and the great variety of its duties, gave to this venerable instrument an absent-minded air, a sort of reserve and dignity, which well set off the easy ways of all the rest of the dwelling. That clock and Agate Bissell never lost a minute of time, were never tired, and attended wholly and only to their own business. It was difficult to decide which of the two was the more exact and regular. In any single day the clock might win; but take the year together, Agate Bissell undoubtedly was the best time-keeper. She had the whole care of the clock. Dr. Wentworth used to rally her on her beau. "That clock is an enchanted knight. Agate is waiting for him, some day, to make proposals. Nothing less than such matchless graces as in him do reside will ever tempt her!"

Rose—who must be moved forward in our story six years—took up her father's imaginations, and wove about the old clock all manner of fanciful notions. She was a double child. Her outward nature was sensible, practical, worldly; her inward nature was deep in feeling, solemn and mystical, but veined and traced throughout with the richest flow of imagination. None except her father knew this inward life; nor he, nor she herself, except in a dim and twilight way.

She was just the one to make a hero of this old tall, black clock. To her its strokes, in the deep nights, when summer whip-poor-wills had waked her, were voices proclaiming messages to men. To look upon its face and watch the rise and occultation of pictured stars, and especially of the great plump-faced moon, that like some men, always seemed scared because it couldn't see anything—was a perpetual, though unspoken pleasure.

But we linger. On the left, as you enter, is the Doctor's grand resort. This library ran through the whole depth of the house. The ceiling was only about nine feet high. The centre was crossed by a dressed beam, and the cornice all around the room was formed by the carved frame-beams of the house itself. On either side of the chimney, which stood midway on the west side, were two deep bay-windows; and, on the north end, one large window coming down to the floor, and of the size of three ordinary windows. The sides of the library were filled with cases, and the whole range of English literature was stored in them. The best authors in the modern languages, too, held their tongues eloquently in this Walhalla. Drawers stuffed with curious pamphlets; lower cases with folios, atlases, etc.; portfolios and volumes of costly engravings—all evinced the Doctor's tastes. Not like the orderly study of Parson Buell was Dr. Wentworth's. No long rows of books stood stiff and stern on the shelves, like soldiers on parade. Some books were out visiting; some, in an affectionate mood, were leaning over on an accommodating neighbor; and some, tired of their heavy contents, had lain down flat and gone to sleep, as if to give their readers, should they have any, the proper cue. Some were splendidly bound, and flamed their golden letters from blue, and green, and crimson, or modest russet. Others stood in cloth; some, in paper. Some shelves were packed and stuffed till they seemed bursting; others stood thinly, like a school half of whose scholars had gone out to play.

Here was the true peace-society. Old quarrels were hushed here. Heretic and orthodox stood in silent truce. The men that kept the world in a racket, in their time,—Luther and they of the Vatican, Milton and Salmasius, Arminius and the whole Synod of Dort, Jesuits and Jansenists, the ancients, mediæval scholastics, modern reformers—were patient with each other and with the rising fame of modern scientific authors. Books are the true metempsychosis—they are the symbol and presage of immortality. The dead men are scattered, and none shall find them. Behold, they are all here! they do but sleep. At your summons every one shall speak and instruct you in the best experiences of his life!

Turning from the hall, as you come in at the front door, to the right, you enter the large parlor; and, next to it, the sitting-room and a door from each room opens into the conservatory, where there was summer all the year round.

The dining-room and kitchen were included in the wing which ran back from the south-east corner of the house, and which was of such dimensions that, had it stood alone, it would have seemed a house of itself.

The old mansion was built in a stately style, at a time when stateliness was well understood. Few modern dwellings are more picturesque, more winning to the eye, than the best of the old colonial mansions. They tell their story at once. They proclaim comfort, room, hospitality, and elegant taste. They are passing away. Perhaps we have nothing to regret. Convenience and beauty have their modern architects. Yet, the the pictorial art ought, while it can be done, to secure those memorials of an early day, and transmit them as precious parts of our New-England history.

But stop. Turn back. We have neglected the heart of home, the mother's room! The old temple had no such holy of holies. The mother's room! Here came she a bride. Here only God's angels and her own husband have heard what words the inmost heart of love can coin. Here were the children born. Here in love were they cherished, in piety consecrated, and here Hope, the mother's prophet and painter, has filled golden hours with a wealth of expectations and fancied joys!

If every child might live the life predestined in a mother's heart, all the way from the cradle to the coffin they would walk upon a beam of light, and shine in glory. Alas! some are born like the dandelion—glowing bright, soon changing to a fairy globe, and by the first wind dashed out and gone!

Paint the man as the mother's thoughts do; then paint him as he really lived! Hang the two portraits side by side, and write, *What he was to be!* and then, *What he was!* Life has no sadder contrast.

Shall I? It is audacious; and yet, for your sake, reader, would do much. Well, come, I will even venture. This is Agate Bissell's room. No one may go in here without leave. She and her room are so much one, that this intrusion she would resent as a personal liberty. I know that politeness forbids, but your curiosity and my love of accurate description prevail, and, as usual, politeness must give way when it is not convenient. No rocking chair, three common chairs—one lower than the others, for sewing,—a mahogany bureau, with an old-fashioned mirror above it, which had been in that very place a hundred years, and had seen—ah! what had it not seen? But most honorable of all friends is the looking-glass, that will not speak—that keeps no secret journal for future treachery—that meets you with the very face that you bring to it—that beholds all your weaknesses without chiding, and never hints advice; into whose placid depths sink, as into a sea, in utter forgetfulness, all the secrets which have figured on its face!

What if one had the power to recall from this cold and passionless glass all that it has ever seen? What if there should be a resurrection of that which has been buried in looking-glasses? Little children's faces, anxious mothers, budding girls beginning to suspect their own beauty, vain and giggling looks, grave and sad looks of those who hate to grow old, vexed looks of those who have cut themselves in shaving, timid and anxious looks of those who have been sick, double images of lovers glancing upon the sweet picture of their embrace, prim and prig pedants touching up their gray whiskers and covering their baldness with the few strawy locks yet left, simple and wondering looks of curly and woolly Phillis, whose honest, homely face is just as dear to her as if it were Cleopatra's.

Many would shrink to have their looking-glasses reveal their secrets. Certain it is that Agate Bissell would not be ashamed to have it tell all that ever she committed to its trust. Faithful, pure-thinking, upright Agate! Positive, precise, sprightly to tartness, who more than thou lived wholly for others? Who ever knew thee fail in the day of trial? When didst thou betray a secret? When didst thou ever shrink from giving honest counsel because it was bitter? Let men look upon thee, Agate, and henceforth honor those words, OLD MAID! When all things are hereafter untied and the contents of various bundles disclosed, it is my opinion that as many noble, self-denying virtues will be found tied up with precise bow-knots in some of those vertical rolls called Old Maids, as in any other that shall appear.

Open the upper drawer! Here we have few laces, one or two ornaments seldom worn, and then only as a special honor to some much-honored friend. Be touched, as I am, with a certain tear-breeding feeling, to see how little the poor have to represent their finer tastes! Some jewels, however, are laid up for them hereafter.

The next drawer. This is fine linen. Not much of it! But it is as white as snow. Not a stitch is broken. How finely folded! How orderly! Agate need not be ashamed that it is so little. She makes it enough by wise economy, and what she misses, some poor shivering creature is wearing, for she is silently generous. All the fine linen of the saints is not that which is made up into ascension robes. Some of it may yet be found in bureau drawers.

Did you ever see a room with so little in it, that looked so comfortable? Find a speck of dirt! Yet, it is not distressingly neat. It has not that coffin-and-shroud snugness that you see in some rooms. It is generous and home-like. A true woman lives in it. That furnishes any room, and subdues its very walls, at length, to humane and gentle expression!

CHAPTER XI.

ROSE-CULTURE.

How happy are proud people! No. Rather how happy are people of pride! That does not hit it exactly.

How fortunate are people with a sovereign self-esteem! I appeal to every one who ever felt the quality, whether pride or self-esteem. Either of them covers or describes that peculiar faculty which inspires in men the sense of their own being, of personal worth, of eminent selfness—not necessarily selfishness.

Why are they fortunate? In such persons there is apt to be a central content. They are always consciously right. They always speak aright. Whatever they do is right. Whatever they own is of the best. Whatever submits itself to their protection is right. Righteousness is the very quality of their experience. Why should you reason with them? It is cruel and useless—cruel to disturb such profound self-satisfaction in a world not too much given to happiness; and useless, because it is an instinct, not a conviction—an involuntary feeling, and not a deduction of reason.

But not all of this tribe of self-esteem are so happy. All the worse for them. If this potent force allies itself with conscience, the possessor may as well make up his mind to be in bondage all his life. Then the sense of ownership and self-appropriation acts chiefly in the sphere of *Duty*.

Agate Bissell could not be said to have pride of character so much as Pride of Duty. She saw every thing in the light of duty, and she measured duty by the high requisitions of an intense pride. Every one may see that she had business on hand for the rest of her life. Nothing was good that had not in it some relation to duty. There was no good in the beautiful, unless in some way allied to practical duty. Happiness, springing from duty, was not altogether to be condemned; yet it must be watched, as likely to take the temper out of the cutting edge of duty.

There was no member of Dr. Wentworth's family that did not feel the pressure of honest Agate's conscience, and respect it, too. It made no difference that her good sense restrained her from meddling with other people's consciences. It is impossible for an energetic nature to move about among men under the power of any great central faculty, and not electrify them. If you carry a torch for yourself, you cannot keep the light out of other people's eyes.

"Rose, have you put away your night-clothes?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Are you sure you folded them up and laid them in their proper place?"

A smile came over Rose's fair face, for she recollected that she had laid them on a chair, and not under the pillow.

"Rose, it is just as easy to do things right as wrong. Go right up and place them as they ought to be, and then come down to your lesson." For Rose was already a proficient with the needle, and for an hour in the morning and one in the afternoon, she was under Agate's special instruction in reading and writing. But, on Saturday the lessons were in the Scriptures and the Catechism. Rose, by nature, was one of the fortunate ones who obeyed those in command, and yet always had her own way. To suppress one tendency was only to open another. She was of a nature so full and vital, that her happiness seemed little checked because stopped in this or that direction.

"The dear child," said Agate, one day, to Mrs. Polly Marble, "is so good that I'm afraid she may not live. If she should die I don't think the Doctor would be good for much."

"I don't think you need take on 'bout it, Agate," said Mrs. Polly. "Mebbe you'll find enough human natur in her to suit you, afore you get through. I've seen just such children before. There's Hotchkiss—till his boy was ten years old, he was so good that his folks was afeered he wa'n't long for this world. Ever since, tho', they have felt easier, for if there ever was a critter that had his full share of total depravity, it is that Paul Hotchkiss. If he's ever convarted, tho', he'll be a smart man, especially if he has it thorough."

"That may be true, Mrs. Marble. In this world it is not safe to trust appearances."

"That's just what I say to my deacon. You know, Miss Agate, that there never was a kinder creetur nor a better man than he is, if it wa'n't for that wi [illegible] After all I've done for him, I don't see that he's got over it a mite. I tell him that nobody is sure, as long as he is livin' in this world of temptation. When a man is safely in his coffin, then we may be comfortable—that is, if he had a hope."

"I sometimes think," said Agate, "that I should like Rose better if she had a little more—well, a little more nature:—some sparks flung off now and then makes you sure there's fire, and that it is not all ashes."

"Well, I really think I shouldn't trouble myself about that. You can't tell by the way a bean comes up what sort of leaves it's goin' to have afterwards. Some children are like poke weed. When it first comes up it's just as good to bile as 'sparagus. But in a few weeks it's so strong it would drive ye out of the house, if you was to put it in the pot. Now, you know that the child is depraved. Everybody is, even ministers have it, tho' I reely don't see but that grace has subdued it in Dr. Buell. Of course Rose is—and I shouldn't worry a bit if I was you. It'll come out in time."

"Mrs. Marble, if there's any such thing as spoiling her, the Doctor will do it. He's the strangest man that I ever heard of. Sometimes I think his books and his foreign learning have unsettled his religious belief. Would it not be dreadful if he was unsound! I know Dr. Buell don't think so. But you ought to hear him make fun of the Catechism! I have trouble enough with the children anyhow. The other Saturday morning, after I'd got through the questions, Dr. Wentworth called Rose.

"'Rose, what do the apple-trees principally teach?'

"Rose understands her father, and her face looked funny all over; but she turned to me as if she didn't want to make fun of the Catechism:

"'Answer him, Rose,' said I, 'answer your father!'

"And, do you believe it, she looked at him with her great, full eyes, and said:

"'They make me think how beautiful God is!'

"The Doctor didn't ask her any more questions, but went off with her in his arms down into the garden."

"Well, Agate, you needn't be discouraged. You know you have the promises. Besides, his wife is a precious woman and that's in your favor."

"It would almost break my trust in God, if Rose shouldn't do well. No--nothing will ever do that, I hope! But then you can't have such a child by you for six or seven years, and not have your heart bound up in her. I can tell you, Mrs. Marble, there's more dangerous idols than those made of wood and stone."

"A good deal worse! 'Eyes have they, but they see not,' saith the prophet. Now, them idols that have pretty eyes, and see out of them too, is a good deal more to be fear'd. I tell my boys so, of'en."

"If any thing *could* spoil Rose, it would be the creatures the Doctor has 'round her. It seems to me as if he contrived to pick out the very worst folks, and let Rose run with them. There is that *natural*, Pete! I do believe Rose would go from me to him any day. The Doctor lets him carry her about the meadows, and woods, and down through the swamp, by half-days together."

"Well, I'd never consent to that. I'd like to see Pete Sawmill about my house! He'd get a piece of my mind about the quickest! He don't do her any good!"

"The Doctor thinks Pete is a true child of Nature. He is not more'n half-witted anyhow. But the fellow *is* curious about knowin' all sorts of things that are going on in the woods, especially if there is no use in them."

"That's what I tell the Deacon. 'Deacon Marble,' says I, 'if you would shove out of ye all your knowins that ain't worth knowin', and then fill up with sober matter, you would be a sight better deacon, and a better man.'"

"That's much so with folks in general."

"Yes; folks' heads is pretty much like their garrets, where all the rubbish and broken things they've no use for down stairs are stored away."

"As if Pete were not enough, Tommy Taft is round with Rose, and Hiram Beers rides her out every chance he can get. There's about twenty people in this town that seems to think that they own Rose!"

No other person could be allowed to say these things but herself. Should a neighbor, or one whom she less confided in than Polly Marble, indulge in unfavorable reflections, Agate would soon enable them to understand that they were meddling with affairs that did not concern them

Now and then, however, but with reserve, she intimated to Mrs. Wentworth her fears for Rose's "bringing up;" for if there was one thing in this whole world which Agate had determined should come to pass, and had staked her life on it, it was tha. "Rose should grow up good and pious."

"Do see that child! She'll be stung to death, as sure as she's alive. Rose, Rose, come away from those bees—come here this minute! I do believe that child is in league with all the animal creation. Nothing is afraid of her, and she is afraid of nothing. See her stepping up nearer and nearer to those hives! I should have had as many stings stuck into me by this time as a baked ham has cloves! She comes home with her pockets full of trash, and with vines hanging about her neck, and with her hands full of bugs and worms. I've given up trying to manage her. It's in her and it will come out. If you stop her at one thing she just goes straight off to another. And she's so good-natured and so quiet and sweet, that you never think it's wilfulness. But she's got her father's will in her, if it is covered up. She knows what she's about."

"Only yesterday I was sitting," said her mother, "in the bow window, just as twilight was coming on, with my sewing in my lap, it was getting too dark to see well, when Rose came marching in:—'Ma, I've got something for you.' 'Bring it here, child,' said I. And she emptied her apron into my lap, in a sober and satisfied way. Of all things in this world; it was a great toad, speckled, fat—ugh! I screamed and flounced it upon the floor. I was startled in good earnest, for if there is any thing disgustful, next to a snake, or a green worm, or a spider, it is a toad."

"What did she do?"

"Do? She looked at me with surprise,—then demurely picked up the loathsome creature and walked out with it. I spoke so sharply that I was afraid I had hurt the poor child, and so I went out, and she was sitting on the offset laughing all over, as if it was the merriest experience of all her life!"

Quite unconscious of these remarks, the object of them, a chubby child of six years old, was standing by the very edge of the shelf on which scores of hives were ranged. Bees were flying out with great activity, and coming in, swinging heavily down, with laden thighs. At first a few whirled around Rose as if to warn her off. But seeing at a glance who it was, and reporting the news to their companions, their excitement and curiosity subsided, and the child was suffered to go as near as she pleased and to do as she liked. If one lit on her hand, she suffered it to creep over it undisturbed. Sometimes an in flying bee would get caught in her hair; she took no pains to help it out; she suffered them to go and come as they would. Sometimes she would gather flowers and bring them toward the hives, and watch the workers as they eagerly sought the honey.

"That child is the doctor's own self in petticoats," said Agate Bissell. "I believe that the Doctor could stuff his pockets full of bees," said his wife, "and they would be contented. But if I go near the bee shed, the angry things fly at me as Rex does at a beggar. They know I am afraid of them. They dash at me with such a way, that I never wait to see what they mean to do, and so they chase me fairly out of that part of the garden."

"I wonder the doctor will keep them; at any rate so many. There must be as many as fifty hives, and more coming on."

"Oh, it's his music. He would not hear a word against his bees. On bright days, that are still and warm, he lies down by the window yonder on purpose to hear them hum and buzz. And, I confess, if I am only safe out of their reach, it is a pleasant sound. Though I do not want them to appropriate him, or make a hive out of his hat. Do you know he looked for it yesterday a half hour, and then found it among the bees? He says Rose carried it thither. I say Rose's father did. But the doctor, you know, likes pleasant sounds, as a kind of mental stimulus. The pleasure of music, he says, consists in the thoughts and feelings which it excites in us. I don't know what bees can make him think of. But, if any thing troubles him he likes to get where he can hear the bees, and then he seems to grow quiet."

"That is better than to brace up with some things," said Agate.

"After that dreadful surgical case he came home looking like a dead man. His face was stern and ghastly. He could'nt eat on that day before he operated, and trembled like a leaf when he left the house. But they say as soon as he took the knife his hand was firm and his body like steel. When he reached home I could not get him food quick enough—he almost cried for it, and was sharp and peevish, till he had eaten enough, which I thought he never could do, and then he went out by the window, where he could see the verbenas and the beds of petunia, and the rows of gladiolus, and lay down, and let the bees chant to him. I quite forgave the creatures their spite at me, when I saw how much comfort he took. After a while he fell asleep, and woke up in half an hour as fresh and merry as he always is."

"I hope Rose will have his knack of being happy. Isn't it queer that she takes so to Pete? She is so peculiar about liking and not liking. I think they are a match. He is as fond of curious notions as she is. But, then, I don't like her going off with him all day, wandering in the woods and poking into the swamps, and following brooks."

"The doctor will not have you say a word about poor Pete He thinks him the only Christian on the place."

"Except when he's in liquor."

"Yes, he owns that he has one fault. But then he has such outlandish ways, and knows so much about the animal kind, and is so unfit to take care of himself; he's so foolish about every thing that most folks care about, and so very knowing about things that are of no sort of use to regular and respectable people, that the doctor thinks he's inspired."

"I do wonder how so good a man as Dr. Wentworth is, should have so many queer notions. Well, we all have our faults."

It is doubtful whether Mrs. Wentworth thought so. There was not a woman in the town that hovered about her husband with such a stream of opposition as she did. She rallied him and chid him, and laughed at him; she put upon him all manner of humorous and grotesque imaginations, invented speeches and imagined situations in which the doctor figured ludicrously. But there was within it all such an unmistakable fondness, and such playfulness, that no one failed to see that she worshipped as well as loved. All this persiflage was her way of hiding or showing, as the case might be, the strength of her attachment. For all the years they had lived together, not a line was less distinct, not a color was faded, not a form was withdrawn from the picture which love first drew. One word in the morning of earnest love filled the whole day with happiness. With increasing power came also a growing sensibility. Never when he first spoke of affection was it so hard to listen with open face as now after eight years of intimacy. The blush came more deeply than at first, the eye fell more quickly, the nerve trembled more freely Whatever there was in her nature susceptible of development, was wholly commanded by her husband. She honored his strength. She rejoiced in his growing influence. She sympathized with his tastes so far as their unlike natures would permit. But to have owned these feelings would have been as impossible as to have spoken in the tongue of angels. It would seem as if, while her whole life centred upon his love, she would hide the precious secret by flinging over it vines and flowers, by mirth and raillery, as a bird hides its nest under tufts of grass, and behind leaves and vines, as a fence against prying eyes.

The garden was the doctor's paradise. Every day, therefore, he heard from his wife some amusing narration of his conduct. Birds and insects were near of kin to him. Of course, birds and insects every day were made to answer for all manner of curious faults. Every day the indictment varied. Now the flowers had beguiled him. Now the bees had infatuated him; now the birds had quite flown away with his wit; now Rose had bewitched him, or he had gone utterly a gadding with Pete Sawmill.

Mrs. Wentworth talked both with quickness and emphasis. Her voice was ringing, but very sweet. No fibre springing from combativeness was twined into the chord, and so its sounding was never sharp or harsh.

A single hour's acquaintance would suffice to discriminate and sharply to separate her from shallow, talkative women, whose tongues, like a turnpike, lie open to all the travel that comes along. It was full of kindness even when bantering. It was often witty, and always shrewd. It ran on as a vine grows,—a morning glory, or a cypress vine,—twining round and round whatever it may touch, and throwing out buds and blossoms at every joint.

"There is Rose, mounted and riding. It is the last we shall see of her till dinner," said Agate Bissell.

"Longer than that. She goes out to Cathcart's, you remember, for the day. Of course Pete is her carriage."

CHAPTER XII.

PETE SAWMILL.

Pete Sawmill himself deserves a portrait. He was a huge fellow, black as night, standing full six feet five in his stockings. "Good for wadin'," he used to say. "That's how I went fishin' fust. I didn' know what they gave me such legs for, if it wasn't to wade brooks with!" He derived his name from his strength, and the fact that he at one time worked in a neighboring sawmill. The boys were telling a story one day of a bear, that had, in earlier times, while the men were cutting logs in the neighboring woods wandered into the mill, and seeing the men's dinner on the log, mounted upon it, and with his back to the saw, began pulling open the cloth, and devouring the meat. The saw soon advanced upon his tail, that lay flat behind him, and nipped a hair or two, at which, a growl! then a sharper pull, and an angrier growl! The third slash cut to the bone, and brought the enraged animal around, with a furious hug at the remorseless saw, which soon rolled him off the log, with sad rents in his garments. This story was once told in his presence, and Pete declared that *he* could hold the saw. And it is said that, getting first a good position, and wrapping the teeth well, when the water was let on he held the saw so powerfully that it could not get into motion. However that may be, the story was always told of him when his name excited curiosity.

Pete was one of those peculiar natures that can never be organized into society, but live, as marmots do, by burrowing in the neighborhood of men, without living among them.

He had the strength of two ordinary men, but had little regular use for it. Good nature was constitutional—and laughing may be said to have constituted the greater part of his language. H began his sentences with a flourish of *te he's*, and they mostly de liquesced into guttural chuckles. When, on public days, trainings, and elections and cattle-shows, Pete's discretion in drink had shown itself to be small, he was never known to quarrel. He settled down in some corner, and talked and laughed to himself with very much the same sounds which issue from a black pot of hasty pudding, as it boils and splutters.

But these periods were not frequent, and Pete was in demand for such work as required strength. For short spells he would put forth extraordinary strength. "I'd rather have Pete to lay stone-walls with than a yoke of oxen," said farmer Jones, "and as for thrashing, he's a perfect machine."

"I love to see him chop wood," said a neighbor. "I think Pete prides himself on the way he swings an axe."

"Well, he's a right to. Just take him on a frosty morning, put a good Collins axe in his hand, and then see him lay off his jacket and mount on a big log; and then he lets it on the wood, and the chips fly so fast that it's dangerous to stand in front. When he's down to the heart of the log, the side of his cut is as smooth as if it had been planed. There's not a man in this town can do up a cord of wood as quick as he can, and as for splittin', he has a natural eye for a log, and sees just where the crack will run. Some folks, you know, strike and strike, and turn the log over, and try it this way and that, afore they find out the splittin'-vein. But Pete sees it the minute he lays his eye on a stick. I saw him one day, when Bose Hadley'd been whalin' away at a big oak log till he was out of breath, take the axe, and turn the log over, and look at both ends, and then square away and let fly, and the axe went through the log so slick, that it fell apart like two boards, and his axe went a rod out of his hands."

"Pete don't know much," said another, "but what he does know comes to him mighty natural."

"I don't know about his bein' so ignorant. His head don't run on books; I doubt if he knows his letters. But, if I'm butcherin', I'd rather have him than old Harvey himself. Then he has a natural turn for horses, specially if nobody else can manage 'em. Pete, somehow, gets in with 'em as if they was related."

"He's pretty good in a garden, too. Every thing lives that he puts out. I'd rather have him set a tree for me than do it myself. Pete hain't growed away from natur' so far but what he knows what's goin' on in beasts and birds. There aint his equal at fishin' in these parts. The fish just cum, I do believe, and ask him to catch 'em."

"He don't take on airs about it, neither He aint stingy. He'd just as soon take you to the best brooks and the best places as not. But then that's nothin'. Very like you can't catch a fish. The trout knows who's after 'em. They want Pete to catch 'em, not Tom, Dick and Harry."

"You mind that time he caught that trout out of Holcomb's mill-pond, don't you?—No? Well, it had been known that there was an awful big fellow livin' in there. And I know a hundred folks had tried for him. Gentlemen had come up from New Haven, and from Bridgeport, and from down to New York, a-fishin', and ever so many of 'em had wound up with tryin' their luck for that big trout, and they had all sorts of riggin'. One, he tried flies, and another worms; sometimes they took the mornin', and sometimes the evenin'. They knew the hole where he lay. He'd been seen breakin' the water for one thing and another, but allus when nobody was fishin'. He was a curious trout. I believe he knew Sunday just as well as Deacon Marble did. At any rate, the deacon thought the trout meant to aggravate him. The deacon, you know, is a little waggish. He often tells about that trout. Sez he, 'One Sunday morning, just as I got along by the willows, I heard an awful splash, and not ten feet from shore I saw the trout, as long as my arm, just curving over like a bow, and going down with something for breakfast. Gracious! says I, and I almost jumped out of the wagon. But my wife Polly, says she, 'What on airth are you thinkin' of, Deacon? It's Sabbath day, and you're goin' to meetin'! It's a pretty business for a deacon!' That sort o' cooled me off. But I do say that, for about a minute, I wished I wasn't a deacon. But twouldn't made any difference, for I came down next day to mill on purpose, and I came down once or twice more, and nothin' was to be seen, tho' I tried him with the most temptin' things. Wal, next Sunday I came along agin, and, to save my life, I couldn't keep off worldly and wanderin' thoughts. I tried to be sayin' my catechism, but I couldn't keep my eyes off the pond as we came up to the willows. I'd got along in the catechism, as smooth as the road, to the Fourth Commandment, and was sayin' it out loud for Polly, and jist as I was sayin': '*What is required in the Fourth Commandment?*' I heard a splash, and there was the trout, and, afore I could think, I said: 'Gracious Polly, I must have that trout.' She almost riz right up, 'I knew you wan't sayin' your catechism hearty. Is this the way you an swer the question about keepin' the Lord's day? I'm ashamed, Deacon Marble,' says she. 'You'd better change your road, and go to meetin' on the road over the hill. If I was a deacon, I wouldn't let a fish's tail whisk the whole catechism out of my head;'—and I had to go to meetin' on the hill road all the rest of the summer.

"Wal, Pete, he worked down to the mill for a week or two—that's as long as he stays anywhere except at Dr. Wentworth's for he lets him come and go about as he pleases. And so, one day, says he, 'I'm goin' to catch that big trout.' So, after the sun was gone down, and just as the moon riz and lighted up the tops of the bushes, but didn't touch the water—Pete, he took a little mouse he'd caught, and hooked his hook through his skin, on the back, so that it didn't hurt him or hinder his bein' lively, and he threw him in about as far as a mouse could have jumped from the branches that hung over. Of course the mouse he put out lively to swim for his life. Quick as a flash of lightnin', the water opened with a rush, and the mouse went under; but he came up again, and the trout with him; and he weighed between three and four pound."

Agate Bissell could not be expected to put a very high value on one who had only, or chiefly, such qualities as gave Pete his repution. He had no purpose in life. He had no trade or calling. He was an idle fellow; and that term expressed the utmost condemnation which she could pronounce upon one not positively guilty of crime or vice.

"Doctor Wentworth, it seems to me that Rose might find a better companion than that lazy fellow! What can she learn of him that will make her either wiser or better?"

The doctor smiled, and only looked at Agate. This habit of hearing what she said without reply seemed to disturb Agate's equanimity. She felt it to be but a way of saying that she was not worth answering, though that was far from the truth. His mind wandered off and followed out what she said, till he quite forgot the answer.

"Agate! will you hand me that large folio of engravings?"

She laid it on the table and opened the volume.

"Now," said the doctor, "do you think it makes any difference with me *who* opens this book for me? The contents are there, and do not depend for their value on the person who opens and shows them. So it is with Pete. He opens the book of nature to Rose—that's all. He has no ideas. He can hardly speak intelligibly. He has no place in society. But he is strangely alive to the facts of nature, and he will show Rose more things in natural history than any person in this town."

"Of course you can do as you please; Rose is your daughter. If she was mine, I don't think I should send her to Pete to learn about this world, or that to come!"

"Courage, Agate! Between Pete and you, I hope to make a good girl of Rose."

CHAPTER XIII.

ROSE AND ALICE.

It was a mid-June day, the very balmiest day of the sweetest month of the New-England summer. All that foreign poets say of May, in our northern land must be applied to June. The boisterous winds that rage in March, the cold nights that undo all that warm April days have done, the chilling rain blown from the east upon aguish May, are all past. All the scars of winter are healed, and the conflicts of the spring have issued in a perfect victory, for whose celebration the leaves shake out their ample folds, and the flowers lift up their banners in every field, and through the forests. Their enemy is destroyed. Frosts are dead, and flowers are jubilant.

It would seem that this day of Rose 's visit to Alice Cathcart, was, above all other June days, transcendent in mild glory. Never were the blue heavens deeper and bluer. Never were clouds softer, or sailing in white islands with more tranquil errands. They did not troop with that stern and brilliant march that they seem to have in October days, as if they mustered, far away, to some call unheard of men, for battle or for vengeance of storms; but they moved gently, as if they carried in their plushy depths sleeping infants, and serenely swaying them, rocked their slumbers into sleep, in a peace high above earthly sounds, and higher even than dreams can fly.

But what foolish creatures birds are! They saw nothing of all this beauty, or else they would not have filled the air with such a racket. Blue-birds whispered their brief syllable of music; the meadow lark, who wears a black heart upon its yellow breast, as if all the year it had a sorrow incurable, wailed out its wild, sweet dirge. Robins, plump and familiar, called and sung, in sober jollity, from every orchard, from gardens and fields, from skirts of bushes, and the edges of the forest—our most familiar and sweetest singing summer birds.

I wrong the sparrow, which begins earlier, sings more constantly, and holds out longer than the thrush—singing its exquisite strain, faulty only in that it is too short, till summer is almost over, till the sun burns the grass, till flocks are silent, till the locusts and the crickets come. No wonder Rose caught her breath, as a song-sparrow broke out in its tenderest strain right above her head, while they were passing a garden edged with trees, and then clapped her little hands, as if asking for more. Who has not done the same, or felt like doing it?

But Pete, on whose shoulders Rose sat with about as much tax upon his strength as an epaulette imposes upon a soldier's shoulder, strided on, to get clear of town and the outskirts, and reach the brook, where he left the road and sought, if not a nearer, yet a pleasanter way, across lots, to 'Biah Cathcart's.

Pete was entirely happy. He had Rose on his shoulder, who sat perked up there with all a queen's joy, and none of her cares. Without knowing why, she felt the influences of the day; and feelings which, later in life, would assume definite form and submit themselves to reason and analysis, now sent up within her vague and gentle influences, which might be likened to the air about her, filled with sweet exhalations from the ground, and odors from the woods, and sounds of every kind.

But Pete, himself only an overgrown child, was, if possible happier yet. Blindly along his nerves crept something of the atmospheric influences, stirring, it is probable, no such nascent poetic influences as thrilled the charming little nosegay of a child on his shoulder, but which, in him, were developed in ways of which Rose was quite unconscious. The venatorial instinct seems in undeveloped men to be the rude germ of that which, in civilized men, grows into scientific wisdom. Persons of fine organization, but without education, are often far more quick to discern, and far more in sympathy with, the instincts and habits of animals than wiser men are. There is a political economy of the woods and fields, as well as of cities and towns—an animal economy as well as a civic economy. Men utterly devoid of the knowledge of property, production, wages, rents or values of any kind, have a clear insight of squirrels, foxes, marmots, fish and birds, in all their varieties.

Pete seemed to know before experience, what every wild creature would do, and had also apparently a fascination over them. To what else could be referred the almost utter tameness to him of creatures shy and wild to all others? The quail would not rise, but ran before him as it is known to do before the horse. A partridge would not fly from its nest, and seemed sure that Pete would respect its domesticity. Squirrels ran down the trees, jumped and pranced along the ground, barking and jerking their tails, as if saying among themselves, "Oh, it is nobody but Pete," and went on with their frolics in conscious security. There was a league of peace between him and all creatures. This did not exclude his rights of snaring and fishing; for how could he claim a place in the human family, if he had no right to destroy life? But it is probable that Pete was regarded by the animal kingdom as a kind of fate, or Providence, and that when he saw fit to take birds or fishes, it was eminently proper that birds and fishes should be resigned to depart without questioning his wisdom or kindness.

Rex, a Newfoundland dog, that seemed to be another Pete running on all fours, seemed this day to be in ecstatic state. He got out of town with only a few capers. But his sobriety was all a pretence; scarcely had he reached the open country before he was scouring the pastures, and rousing up the old cows to great excitement in defence of their calves, while two or three brood mares with pokes on, their colts footing it fleetly in advance of them, disappeared over the hill.

"Come back, Rex! you nigger you! Come here, you liar you! Ye said you would behave if I'd let you come."

Rex, with his red tongue out, came at once to his senses, and trotted behind Pete, as if he had never dreamed of an irregularity. But a little further on, over a bit of round hill, fed a few dozen sheep, and he could no more help going off into them, than a gun can when a spark lights on the powder. In one half minute there was not a sheep to be seen. If they had been blown away by the wind, as leaves are, they could hardly have made such expedition as when Rex suddenly appeared among them.

"Hup! Hup! Rex, you villain! Come down! Come down, you rogue!"

Almost before the sentence was finished, Rex, with a look of the most undisturbed good nature, came over the wall like a grasshopper, leaping first and looking afterwards; and, as the wall stood upon the crest of a bank, no sooner had he cleared it than he performed a summersault, and rolled down in a manner of which any dignified dog should have been ashamed, but at which Rose laughed till she almost fell off her roost.

Rex seemed really penitent, and might have finished the journey with credit, if Widow Hubbard had not kept geese. The moment he ran up the little hill which overlooks the brook, he saw them. Slipping through the bushes and over the fence, in a twinkling the whole flock were in a whirl. Some rushed for the water, some tumbled over, all were screaming and trumpeting, and several having got wing, flew squawking for a hundred rods, and came down from sheer inability to keep up. But long before they alighted, Rex had let all alone, and stretched away up the brook to take a smell and a scratch at a woodchuck's hole which never failed to throw him into a paroxysm of excitement since the day that he ran a marmot into it.

The great, succulent leaves of the skunk's cabbage were fully expanded. In places where the brook spread out into a kind of marsh, cowslips were blazing in clumps of yellow, and as they came near the open edge of the woods, spring flowers in great variety bloomed in endless profusion.

By the time that Rose had reached the same point, Rex, his ardor abated, sat on his haunches, panting, his red tongue hanging out, and the utmost propriety stamped on every feature. How little are dogs to be trusted! This decorum is not skin deep. You would think him a judge. His thoughts run upon duty, moderation, propriety. If you believe it, just let a red squirrel or a chipmunk put its nose out of the wall, and see!

Rose would dismount for a few flowers which she espied. Then she must needs be put on the top of the stone wall, next the bar post, where she could look along the brook valley on the other side. Here the little queen took on airs, and sent her Ethiop to get her some moss, or for a sprig from yonder bush, or for some white pebbles out of the brook, for a few rushes out of the bog, for some partridge-berry vines from the edge of the wood. Around her straw gipsy bonnet she had arranged a coronet of leaves and vines and flowers, with a skill that showed how well already she had learned of her father the secret things which flowers tell to all who have their senses exercised to understand the secret lore of Nature.

From her lap full of various treasure, Rose looked along the winding brook, along the narrow, level meadow which stretched far inland, along the jutting edges of the forest, to the far off blue hills. She forgot where she was. The scene grew shadowy and fantastic. Already, before she knew the words by which men express it, Nature was teaching her something of the Infinite. The visible was leading her to the invisible, and she saw dimly, or felt, the power of the world to come!

Of old, God spoke, in watches of the night, to young Samuel sleeping in the Tabernacle. And still God speaks to the young in the greater Tabernacle of Nature, calling them with voices or influences which, if understood, would reveal strange and deep things, well worthy to be known.

Pete was sprawled upon the ground, watching a petty ant-hill and its little fiery swarm, and was coaxing the ants to crawl on his black hand, when Rose summoned him to resume the journey.

They came to the pine woods in which winds always seemed to Rose to be moaning and sighing, where melancholy birds cried: "Cree-ah, cree-ah," with so sad a tone, that Rose could have cried for them. Through this strip of pine, smelling fragrant of resin, upon the cast off and dead leaves that never more rustle, but cover the ground with soundless carpet, Pete strided, stopping only to point up to a crow's nest. Then they came to a hardwood grove, full of wild azaleas and kalmias. Partridges nested in the part that ran round the side of the hill, and Pete knew where, but had no time now, for it was already between nine and ten. But he must needs show Rose a hole where flying squirrels lived, and stopped in one little open glade to let her see the red squirrels run, and to listen if they might hear the wood-thrush sing. They might have heard it; for they had hardly cleared the grove before it filled the woods with its solitary ecstasy. Rex knew the ground, and though there were endless temptations in the swamp yonder, and quails on the edge of the wood, and partridges among the thick underbrush under the ledge, and infinite delight all round, yet his tender heart knew that he was drawing near to Spark, a black and tan terrier, now only separated from him by the width of a field.

As Rex came over the wall into the door yard, Spark let forth such a stream of barking and yelling that it seemed as if the heat of his rage had melted the separate notes into a molten solution of bark, which terminated as suddenly as it began, when Rex came trotting up, proud as a lion, carrying his long-ridged tail up in the air like a banner. They ran round each other with most familiar smellings, and finally broke away together in a rush down the yard, rolling over and wrestling and racing, until suddenly Spark remembered that he had something hid under the barn—a rat, or perhaps a weasel, or who knows, it may have been a— whatever that is which a dog is thinking of when he rushes off to poke his nose through each chink, and peep in at every hole, and smell around the whole circumference of the barn and its sheds!

The appearance of Rex vaulting over the wall was the signal that Rose was near. Alice was waiting impatiently, and if good Rachel Cathcart, who filled the whole house with her presence, and yet seldom spoke, and then not above a melodious whisper, had she said what she felt, she would have owned the day to be a little brighter for Rose's coming. And so when Rex's black muzzle came over the wall, and set off Spark, every body ran to the door, and Alice, with her black hair shining in the sun and hanging down her shoulders, shaded her eyes with her hand, and watched on tip-toe. First came a little bit of color, which sunk again, but at a step nearer showed a face in it, and a second after a great, good-natured black visage was rising over the wall, and Pete sailed up to the door, giggling and gurgling, as was his manner of salutation. Pete gave Rose a toss, and she, light as a bird and springy as a squirrel, alit by Alice's side, and each of them disappeared in the other's arms, in a sort of general mixture of kissing and caressing.

Aunt Rachel—Rose always called her aunt—stood looking at them as if, for a moment, all the world looked bright, and children, at least, had a right to be happy.

And now, what were the girls to do? Do?—the morning was not long enough for their pressing necessities! First, they ran to Alice's room, and, with much confidential and low talk, inspected some, I know not what, treasure—may be a new cap,—perhaps a doll,—possibly a baby's bed or bureau,—and it may be a whole suit of doll's apparel! There was a session up garret, which was genera play-room, and where all sorts of stow-aways and good-for-somethings—crippled chairs, dilapidated bureaus, old fire-fenders, and boxes of various patterns, give endless room for rummaging. If they find any thing, well and good; if they do not, they make it all up, saying: "Oh, Rose, what if we should open that drawer, and then you should see a gold bird, and he should jump out and fly up on that clothes-line, and begin to sing!" etc.

But Rose, to-day, was to see more substantial things; for it was the cheese-day, and Aunt Rachel's cheeses, like every thing from her hands, admitted of no rivalry. Already the curd was formed; but Rose was called to see it broken up, salted, drained and pressed. With wonder she inspected the cheese-room, where some two score cheeses, of various ages, lay ranged upon the successive shelves.

"These are old," said Alice, pointing to the topmost row; "these are going to market; and these are not cured yet; we have to turn and rub them every day."

Which operation Rose gravely essayed to perform under Aunt Rachel's direction.

Nothing could long detain the children from the only city of a child's desire—a huge, old-fashioned barn! There is something in its homely simplicity, in its negligence, that puts them at ease. No carpets hold them in caution; no furniture lords it over the freedom of their motions. No valetudinarians or nervous people are incommoded by their noise. It is a very castle of liberty to them! They are unwatched and untutored. They are their own masters. Mice squeak and quarrel in the bins and barrels. The old cat is roused by the symptoms, and lies alert, crouched, or glides eagerly in and out searching for her prey. Swallows fly in and twitter up and down about their nests plastered under the ridge-pole. Flocks of hens come to the door, look in first with one eye, and then with the other,—each one calling "Cut-cut-cutarkut!" or else suppressing in her throat some remark not prudent to utter.

To-day, both doors, wide and high, stood wide open, leaving the floor clear through to the sunshine and fresh air. One mow was empty, waiting for the new crop of hay soon to be cut. The other side yet held many tons, and furnished a spot for jumping and frolicking. With a wild outcry a hen flies off her nest. On would think she had been threatened, attacked, and every righ rudely invaded! Instead of that she has only laid an egg! Many of her superiors make all the noise without an egg. The children run for it,—they search for others,—and, oh! joy of excitements, find a new nest, with ten eggs in it! They bear their treasure and triumph of discovery to the house with exultation. They race back again for their sport. Their bonnets are gone, their cheeks are flushed,—every thing is mirthful,—they laugh at the gate, and laugh at the hens, and laugh at Spark, who is just now seized with the conviction that there is a rat somewhere, and who is running wildly, all a-tremble with excitement and fairly screaming with fury at the dastardly rat, who has not the rat-hood to come forth and show himself openly, but meanly takes advantage of his hole!

They peer into the root-cellar, and look timid,—it is so very dark, and a foul, damp air and smell of old roots send them away. The grain-room is more attractive. They measure oats, and climb up on the slippery ears of unshelled corn, which slide them down as fast as they scramble up. They get into the buggy, and lay the whip upon imaginary horses, and jounce up and down upon the springy seats, as if the road was very rough or the speed very great. The well, too, calls them. It is an old-fashioned well, dug so many years ago that every body has forgotten when. It is very deep—they peer over, and look down, and can see nothing; and that is always very terrible when one is looking into darkness; and both run away, and then laugh because they run.

It is noon. Ah, how clear the sky! How sweet the air! How full of clover smell—great red clover, which spreads out just below, whole acres, and has drawn hither bees from every direction, and made them greedy with delight! And now the horn blows. It is dinner time—twelve o'clock. "There is father!" cries Alice, and runs for him, and Rose hard after, and both get kissed for their pains, and one is mounted on one shoulder and one on the other—while Barton Cathcart, in tow pantaloons, barefoot, tanned, all but his eyes and hair, which are black as night, walks briskly, to let the girls see that ten years old can keep step with full-grown men. And Papa Cathcart must wash his great head and tan-colored neck and short hair all over—and Barton Cathcart must wash his soiled hands and tanned face—and Rose and Alice must wash their red faces and white hands!

The dinner was in the great kitchen to-day. Not that there was not a dining-room, which served also for the sitting-room. But now was the busy time, and the old kitchen was so large and pleasant, and it was so much easier for Mrs. Cathcart to do the work, there being only a girl to help her. The doors stood wide open, and the windows stood wide open, and before long mouths were open too. The potatoes could not contain themselves, but in the goodness of their hearts had split open with benevolence, and lay in the dish like sacks of meal ripped open and spilling. The meat smelled so good!—even the dogs could not wait. Rex, with the most beseeching eagerness, licked his chops, and Spark whined and trembled, and half-barked, as much as to say, "I can't stand it much longer."

They all ate—the two hired men ate, and the man that hired them ate, and the boys ate, and the girls, and even the dogs ate, snapping the morsels and scraps from time to time flung to them, and swallowing them so suddenly, that it was as if they had been flung down a well.

Where was Pete? Gone back to town to tell the Doctor and Mrs. Wentworth that Rose would stay all night, and that Pete was to come back with some fish-spears, and that a party would be formed to go out to Broad Brook that night to spear suckers. Pete mounted the colt,—a horse ten years old, but which was still called the colt. The "young horse" was nearly fifteen. Indeed, the team horses were only seven and eight years old, and the "colt" and "young horse" were the veterans. On his bare back Pete sat astraddle, his long legs nearly sweeping the ground, and both horse and rider being of one mind, the journey was not long, nor was the return so delayed but that Pete arrived in ample time to secure his dinner.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NIGHT FISHING.

LONG had Alice been promised that she should see some night fishing. What it should be, filled Rose with mysterious imaginations. Hardy and tough Barton, who that afternoon had vacation in honor of Miss Rose, being three years her senior, felt the importance of his superior age, and taught and dictated in the most edifying manner.

The spears were sharpened, and Pete and Barton made torches, tying a rude tin cup to a short stick and filling it with turpentine and oil. A loose wick was provided, which was capable of giving a broad glare of light.

At length the supper was over; the two-horse wagon came round; the girls were charged with extra shawls for use when returning. The light along the West was yet a day light, but was rapidly fading. Great clouds lay banked up far away in the south-west, and flashes of light shooting through them told of distant thunder-storms. But all the sky hitherward was clear and serene, and within an hour the moon would be up.

A drive of a mile brought the party to Broad Brook. It was one of those rocky and gravelly streams found in mountain regions, which emigrants settled upon the flat alluvial lands of the West long for, when in fevers they lie half asleep and half awake, and dream that they are back again at home, and see the water clear as crystal rushing over the pebbles, or widening into sheets, and, longing for its coolness, awake, and in their weakness shed tears for very home-sickness!

Broad Brook was of mountain origin. Into it came Glover's Brook from the ravine, famous for its wildness and its trout, and Twist's River, and ever so many more mountain-fed little streams so that by the time it had come down to Morse's Bridge it had become a stream of some dignity and power. Had its waters been compressed into narrow bounds, it would have been formidable for any one who should seek to ford it. But it preferred to spread itself, and to brawl over a wide bottom, and to wind along the edges of the hills, with meadows on one side and rocks on the other, now and then circuiting off far into the grass-lands, running deep, with many a pool. Above the bridge, for the most part, it hugged the hills, and was broad and shallow, better fitted for wading.

The party was soon upon its banks. The western light had grown dim. A steep bank on the far side of the river, clothed with trees, and especially held by the solemn black hemlock, served to shut out the little remaining twilight. The roar of the brook, its wild and threatening look, at first daunted Rose and Alice, and brought them close to each other, to Barton's great edification. That was because they were girls! He would show them! and without more ado he jumped into the water, not quite knee deep, and walked across and back, and let the water bubble up around his legs. The torches were soon lit, and Pete and Barton took each a spear, and, girding a bag about them to hold the fish, began to move up the stream. From the banks, under 'Biah Carthcart's care, the girls watched the strange and wild scene. The smoky torches threw a red glare on the water, whose wrinkled face gave back the light in broken flashes. The bank obscurely loomed out from the other side, jutting forward, seemingly, as the light hazily revealed its rocks, and drawing back again when a clump of hemlocks or mountain laurels opened dark recesses through the foliage. Moving slowly against the rushing stream, passing the light along its surface, and surveying its bottom, Pete and Barton for a time seemed to find nothing. But as they neared a point where the water, swinging around, deepened a little, Barton plunged down his spear, and, with some commotion and tussle, held it there. His torch had almost fallen. But regaining his foothold, he soon lifted a large sucker above the water, the first prize of the evening. Scarcely was his trophy secured before Pete, who had been bending and searching the bottom, was seen aiming his spear, and with sudden stroke, retracted as soon lifted a fish large enough to make the ashen spear-handle bend.

Growing bolder as they advanced, Rose and Alice imagined themselves in a fairy story. Pete and Barton, now in gloom and now shining out in the red light of the torches, seemed like gnomes. The trees, as the torches were carried under them, were lit up with an atmosphere such as no unenchanted trees ever knew. The water seemed to be some living thing and scowled or laughed, winked and blinked, as if it knew something wild and dreadful. Now the stream left the hill, and moved between two rows of stiff alders, and the fishers were lost to the sight, only a faint red smoke flickering above the bushes, revealing their progress. Then winding back again, the stream brawled against the rocks, and ran for a long way under the projecting branches of hard-wood trees.

And now the girls, growing somewhat bolder and more familiar, wanted to go into the brook. Of course they could not. But couldn't somebody let them ride? How could 'Biah Cathcart carry two girls, seven years old, when the river bottom was so uneven? What if his foot should slip, or he should step down into a hole—where would the girls be?

But couldn't Pete take one, and the father take the other? Rose could ask for nothing which Pete would not do. He would have laid down in the river, or in a mud-hole, or climbed the steepest rock, or jumped the most dangerous chasm, if Rose told him to. And when, as they rounded a clump of bushes, Pete came near the bank, Rose said to him, "Pete, mayn't I get on your shoulder?" the controversy was ended, and in a twinkling he was at the bank, and Rose was mounted; and Alice, not a minute after, was on her father's shoulder close behind, and all were in the foaming stream. And now I defy you, O painters, to render me in true form and color that scene—the wrinkle-faced river, ruddy and changeful—the overhanging boughs, up into whose obscure depths shoots a smoky, tremulous light—and the strange forms of men moving slowly along the water, bearing two maidens as sweet as ever dazzled the eyes of deluded mortals! Was it strange that Rose seemed to herself translated from the real world into one of dreams? The dizzy gravel at the bottom appeared to her to be running and racing; the water seemed like so many serpents red and black, wreathing together and winding in and out of coils that were endless in length and strange in their convolutions. Never had she seen such leaves as those there above her head, weird with light shot up upon them from beneath, and over all, the solemn black of the night sky!

They had well nigh reached the upper road when the moon rose, and poured its light full upon the bridge that now appeared not far ahead, and upon a party that sat in an open carriage gazing down upon this strange procession.

"Mercy—look down into that river! What is it, Hiram?"

"Wal, as near as I can see, it's a nigger sprouting and blossoming into a white folk. If 'Biah Cathcart warn't a sober man, I should say that hindermost one was he, and his darter on his back. And if that one ahead ain't Pete and the Doctor's Rose, I'll never kiss my wife agin. Scissors and pumpkins! if that ain't a spree! and here it is after nine o'clock at night! Hullo there! where's Aunt Rachel? and where's the rest of the family? Ain't there any more comin'? You might jest as well have finished out the frolic and brought along every thing you've got, as to have them children out this time o' night!"

But Hiram's banter had no effect upon the party. All of them were keyed up too high with the sport. Pete gurgled and giggled; 'Biah said nothing, but smiled contentedly; and Barton alone had voice to shout, till the woods rung.

"You'd better take them children home, unless you want a bigger river on the top of 'em than you've got under 'em!" said Hiram, as he touched his ponies and started away.

Sure enough! The sky was gathering clouds. Low and distant thunder was heard. They must hasten back. Blinded and bewildered by the unnatural light and the swirling water, 'Biah and Barton would have followed down the bank but for Pete, whose head seemed as unaffected by the scene as a compass is by the commotion of waters. The winding of the river had given them a course of two miles, but scarcely half a mile need be traversed in a straight line, to bring them to the wagon. Following Pete, they soon were safely seated, and the horses, impatient and restive, as if by instinct aware that a storm impended, no sooner had their heads turned homeward, than they dashed off with full course. The sparks flew from under their feet. They grew more eager with each turn of the road, and 'Biah soothed and restrained them with both voice and rein. It seemed to the girls that the whole ride was like an arrow's rush. Bushes darkly loomed and disappeared, a faint glimmer of a house was extinguished in a second by their rapid passing. The wind was swaying the trees and rolling up the damp dust of the road, and the thunder shook the very ground as it fell nearer and nearer. They were not afraid. They secretly gladdened with the growing turmoil.

Aunt Rachel had been uneasy ever since the children left

Rex had been kept in the house lest his freaks should disturb the fishing. At every sound he lifted his muzzle. Often he went to the door, and smelt and whined. But now the storm was coming on. Aunt Rachel's fears grew painful. Every thunder-roll increased her alarm. The big drops were beginning to smite the panes of glass, when Rex bounced up with excitement, and gave a roaring bark which could mean nothing but their arrival. In good time! for, just as the party tumbled out, and the girls were borne in, the torrent descended; and when the light from the open door struck out into the air, sheets of water seemed literally to fulfil Hiram's hyperbole, that rivers of water would fill the heavens.

"Oh, father," said Rachel Cathcart, "it is wild of you to have these children out on such a night! Come in, my darlings."

But Rose and Alice were evidently too much excited and happy to need pity.

"Why, Rachel, do you suppose people catch cold when they are excited like these children?"

"But what would Doctor Wentworth say?"

"Say? Why he would say that such an experience was better than a dozen volumes of books—that it would give life to the imagination, that it would give the children impressions which would enlarge their whole after life—that's what he would say! and if he had been along himself, he would have enjoyed it better than any of us. Don't you think so, Rose?"

Rose sagely assented.

"Why, father, you seem as much excited as the children!

"Why not? I hope never to get over being young. I look back on this night as if I had been walking in a cave full of crystals. I shall never forget it, and I'll warrant the children never will. Such things clean off the drudgery and sameness of life, and reach toward a deeper meaning. At any rate, that's what the doctor 'll say, to-morrow You see if he don't."

CHAPTER XV

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

AFTER a day of so much excitement the two girls would scarcely be held from sleep by the violence of the storm. Only at one or two tremendous peals of thunder did they start from their slumber and listen to the sweeping wind, which rattled every window, roared in the chimneys, and shook the whole house. Then suddenly the tumult would cease. Not a drop of rain would fall. Not a leaf seemed to move, nor a puff of wind to blow. Just as suddenly would the rain again pour in torrents, only abruptly to cease, as if a valve had been shut, and the supply instantly cut off.

Nor did the light that fell upon their faces, as Aunt Rachel came for her last care before retiring, disturb an eyelid. The darkness and the light are alike to those whom God translates into the mysterious world of sleep. Strange world! in which we dwell in unconsciousness a quarter part of all our lives. Is four score years then so long, that from it must be subtracted a full fourth part?

To one of Rachel's peculiar habits of mind the spectacle of sleep is always solemn and mysterious. Where do their spirits wander? Voyaging along the dark continent, through what influences do they glide? What guardian spirits convoy them? Or what spiteful sprites would annoy them? If they were dead, would they not lie just as now they do? Rachel shuddered as she tucked them up and put back a raven lock of hair that had escaped from Alice's cap.

Think it not strange that a farmer's wife should deeply ponder questions which have tasked the deepest thinkers. Careful thinking may demand careful culture. But it is nature that gives the power to think, and it is conferred on many who never train their faculties with the help of schools. Now and then, and in New England often, are to be found plain and uncultured persons, whose unconscious thoughts deal habitually with the profoundest questions which man can ponder. The very intensity of religious conviction—at once the cause of so much that is good, and the occasion of so much ill repute—tends, at length, to breed among the common people an aptitude for deep moral problems.

But Rachel never sought such subjects. They came to her, and came largely through her feelings and her imagination. She was scarcely conscious of her own agency in producing the thoughts—half-sad impressions of the infinite—which seemed to overshadow her. She was scared at the impressions which seemed to fall upon her,—just as birds, singing in a thicket, if the shadow of a hawk sailing in the air pass by, hush their notes and nestle close. Many have marvelled at the mystery of human life, its irregularities, its inequalities, its incompleteness, its contradictory elements, its inequitableness. These were not Rachel's peculiar thoughts. Life seemed every day like a voyage along the edge of a great spirit world, out of which, it seemed to her, presently would come some infinite truth, some revelation. These were not *thoughts*, but vague feelings.

Nor are such tendencies uncommon among common people There are many fine natures hidden under coarse forms. Powerful impressions are produced on many who cannot resolve them into ideas, and still less fashion them to words. Along the furrow, by the work-bench, in the chamber, or in the kitchen, have been thousands silently plying the unknown with as solemn an earnestness as that of those who write books to prove how little man can know of the Unknowable.

Of all that have cast line or net into that sea, whose line has straightened? and whose net has been broken with its draught of fishes?

But this evening, as if stirred up by the excitement of the night and the storm, Rachel seemed to gaze upon Alice as one who sends a child afar off. What is before her? Is her life already rolled up within her, as leaves and blossoms are in buds? Do men come into life mere messengers to fulfil decrees? Is this child like a dyer's thread, whose colors, differently measured and laid in, shall in weaving form a prearranged figure? And what is the pattern? Who knows? And what will be the weaving? Who can tell? Can any one hinder it? or help it? *Must* it be?—Is it decreed?—will my darling's life unfold as inevitably as a rose pit into a rose bush; an apple seed into an apple tree? Must I let her go, as one would cut loose a skiff, and let it drift out into the wide ocean? It may founder or strand upon a desolate island, or monsters may seize it, or rough men, seeing it helpless on the sea, snatch up its little voyager into some ship of foreign tongue, on rude and dangerous voyages! Already Rachel felt that Alice was gone out of her arms, and that dull aching which came from the soul's deep sense of pilgrimage—from the habit of solitary thought, from its pining after truths beyond the boundary lines—was a premonition of sorrow.

Rachel left the children and went down stairs. The storm was sobbing itself to rest. The thunder grew more distant, and the rain settled down to a steady work of fine and constant drops Into the great kitchen she went, and closing the doors, ere long she was bowed in prayer. No words escaped her. Yet tears were there many, and many sighs. But, as the storm had spent itself out of doors, so it would seem as if this pleading face to face with God had scattered her clouds, and if she did not arise radiant, she at least wore a face solemn with the peace of resignation. If one shall ask, was there need of such trouble? Not to him that asketh. But to him that is born to sing, singing is a necessity: and to him that is born to sigh, sighing is a necessity. Some smile easily, and some are just as easily sad. Some think. Some feel. Each has his mood.

A conscience that is idealized, that clothes the minutest shades of life with transcendent importance, and sees refinements in duty far beyond common eyes, cannot help stamping the character with a peculiar experience.

The broad common sense of Rachel's husband was enough touched with the imagination to give richness, and plain and practical refinement. But he was not wont to spend thought either upon his own states of mind, or upon the subtle questions which dazzle, or darken, natures of a mystical tendency. He knew all the doctrines of religion as she did. He read the same books, listened to the same sermons; but the result in each was utterly unlike. There was not simply definiteness, but uniformity of conception in his mind. Once having explored a doubt and mastered it, he never was troubled by it again. Once having traced the proofs of any proposition to an intellectual conviction, he saw that truth standing forever clear and firm.

Rachel lacked that philosophical grip which holds a truth to its place, and compels it to a decent and conventional behavior. Truths came and went above her head, as summer clouds do—casting down their shifting shadows in endless variety and never twice alike. A fear which was mastered yesterday was as fresh to-day as the new wind of March, which blows no less to-day because it was spent and hushed yesterday evening.

If in her childhood truth had risen upon her mind in its wider aspects, and the infiniteness of divine tenderness had fired the imagination and toned the conscience, it is not easy to see what measure of difference there would have been between the result and that which actually had taken place, by an early and continued presentation to her mind of sterner views of divine justice and of the requisitions of divine purity.

Winged with imagination and colored with fear and exquisite sensibility of conscience her thoughts ranged those vast fields of truth so familiar to New-England pulpits; not as if affrighted with some near and impending terror, but as sad with long-familiar truth, whose glory and beauty cast down shadows and twilight upon our mortal state. and stained all human life.

That this was a feeling rather than a conviction made it the more unmanageable. That it dissolved and fled away often, when sharply pierced with a clear truth, was of little use so long as "the clouds returned again after the rain."

It should not be thought that these inward experiences produced a moping, tear-shedding woman, who carried her shadow over all the household. Rachel had a peculiar charm of personal presence. Her sympathy was so quick, her goodness so deep, her intuitions so fine. that she took hold upon all who came near her and evinced a singular power of producing happiness in them. Nothing of her own moods appeared to ordinary observers except a fine sadness, which passed among her friends not apt to distinguish closely between shades of feeling, simply as tenderness. It is not uncommon for such natures to guard their inward life with a jealous shame, as if it would, if known, lower them in men's approbation. And sometimes, too, the rebound from these airy and endless musings into practical kindness brings grateful relief. At any rate, Rachel was known neither by her children nor her friends as one of an unhappy experience, but as one of the few that were far more than they seemed; whose reserve was that of inward occupation and depth, rather than of timidity or of pride.

The morning came to the happy children. Alice was to return with Rose, and spend the day in town, and Rose was to show and share a wealth of things indoors and out, which seemed to Alice —whose more simple and retired life seldom met with superfluities —a fairy world.

Is there in life a fairer sight than two maidens, just emerging from childhood, twined together in love, gentle, strong, sincere, and full of fancies; who see real things as if they were visions, and imaginary things as if they were real; whose days and nights flow musical as a meadow brook, between green banks, and over a bottom rough just enough to give flash and ripple to the surface? All the simplicity of childhood is yet theirs, while dawning duties and social proprieties begin to jut out like the buds in early spring. How beautiful the contrast between Alice, sensitive, reserved, and full of innate dignity—whose cheek changed color to her feelings, shifting almost as the colors flash from a humming-bird's back as he quivers among flowers,—and Rose, fair skinned, of a brown hair that might be called suppressed auburn,—free, frank, strong and loving,—who seemed conscious of the life and meaning of every living thing except herself. She had that perfect health which produces unconsciousness of self. Alice accepted mirth but never created it. Rose sparkled with it. Her thoughts moved in a brilliant atmosphere. In certain of her moods events, people, and even soulless objects, sparkled with gayety and humor. The two girls might be called, in the language of art, Light and Shade.

CHAPTER XVI.

STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

If a day in a country farm-house is joyous to town-people, not less exhilarating to country friends is a day in a town-mansion. Alice, in her silent and gentle way, seemed to absorb happiness from the very air. That sensitive timidity, which was like an outer-garment to her really courageous and resolute nature, suffered no embarrassment in Dr. Wentworth's family. Agate Bissell's plain speech and direct manner never left an unfavorable impression. There was a flow of honesty and undisguised kindness which children instinctively recognized. Her whole conduct was indulgent, though her language seemed monitorial and even magisterial.

Mrs. Wentworth was one whose soul shone through her face, and gave it an almost transparent look. She lived under the influence of her best faculties,—therefore her manner and influence seemed to excite the best faculties of those who met her. Very clear-headed was she, very cheerful, and very kind. Your first glance upon her face would lead you to say, Penetration is her ruling trait. Your second glance would convince you that Sympathy was more strongly indicated. If she spoke, you would conclude that no one feeling ruled, but many,—and all of them good. At first, you would think—This woman sees through all films, and cannot be deceived; next, you would feel—There is no need of hiding any thing from her—she is to be trusted.

As for Dr. Wentworth—nobody saw through him, and every body trusted him. There was no dormant faculty in him—he was alive all around his soul. There were no Arctic and Antarctic zones. The whole globe of his nature was tropical, and yet temperate.

His moods ran through the whole scale of faculties. He wa various as the separate days. He carried the germs of every thin which bore fruit in other men's characters, and so could put himself into sympathy with every kind of man. A great talker a times, yet even when most frank, he was more silent tha talkative, and left the impression of one who had only blown the foam off from unfathomable thoughts.

What a place was his house for children! An old mansion, quaint and voluminous, stored full of curious knick-knacks, more curious books, and most curious engravings; yet the interior of the house was even less attractive to children than the grounds about it. Such dainty nooks there were, such pet mazes among the evergreens, such sweeps of flowers and tangles of blossoming vines, such rows of fruit-laden trees, such discoveries to be made, here and there, of new garden plats, of before unseen beds of flowers, such wildernesses of morning-glories, and tangles of honeysuckles running over rocks, or matted in the grass, that once out, the children never wanted to go in, and once in, they could hardly persuade themselves to go out.

When the afternoon was turning in the West, and the sunlight began to shoot golden beams under the branches of the trees, and the shadows stretched themselves every moment larger and larger along the ground, as if the time were near for them to fall asleep, Dr. Wentworth came in from his patients and joined the children. Then there was racing and frolicking! Then you might have seen three children indeed!

But, after a time, Rose began to persuade her father to tell some stories. Story-hunger in children is even more urgent than bread-hunger. And so, at length, he suffered himself to be led captive to his favorite tree, where scores of times he had been wont to weave fables and parables for Rose;—fictions that under every form whatsoever, still tended, in his child's imagination, to bring Nature home to her as God's wonderful revelation, vital with sentiment and divine truth. Sitting upon the ground, with one child on either side leaning upon his knees and looking up into his face, he began:

THE ANXIOUS LEAF.

"Once upon a time a little leaf was heard to sigh and cry, as leaves often do when a gentle wind is about. And the twig said, 'What is the matter, little leaf?' And the leaf said, 'The wind just told me that one day it would pull me off and throw me down to die on the ground!' The twig told it to the branch on which it grew, and the branch told it to the tree. And when the tree heard it, it rustled all over, and sent back word to the leaf, 'Do not be afraid; hold on tightly, and you shall not go till you want to.' And so the leaf stopped sighing, but went on nestling and singing. Every time the tree shook itself and stirred up all its leaves, the branches shook themselves, and the little twig shook itself, and the little leaf danced up and down merrily, as if nothing could ever pull it off. And so it grew all summer long till October. And when the bright days of autumn came, the little leaf saw all the leaves around becoming very beautiful. Some were yellow, and some scarlet, and some striped with both colors. Then it asked the tree what it meant? And the tree said, 'All these leaves are getting ready to fly away, and they have put on these beautiful colors, because of joy.' Then the little leaf began to want to go, and grew very beautiful in thinking of it, and when it was very gay in color, it saw that the branches of the tree had no color in them, and so the leaf said, 'Oh, branches! why are you lead color and we golden?' 'We must keep on our work clothes, for our life is not done; but your clothes are for holiday because your tasks are over.' Just then, a little puff of wind came, and the leaf let go without thinking of it, and the wind took it up, and turned it over and over, and whirled it like a spark of fire in the air and then it fell gently down under the edge of the fence among hundreds of leaves, and fell into a dream and never waked up to tell what it dreamed about!"

How charming it is to narrate fables to children! How daintily do they carry on the conscious dramatic deception! They know that if the question were once got in upon them, "Are these things *true?*" the bubble would burst, and all its fine colors would disappear. Children are unconscious philosophers. They refuse to pull to pieces their enjoyments to see what they are made of. Rose knew as well as her father that leaves never talked. Yet, Rose never saw a leaf without feeling that there was life and meaning in it. Flowers had stories in them. The natural world stole in upon her with mute messages, and the feelings which woke in her bosom she attributed to nature, and the thoughts which started she deemed a revelation and an interpretation of truths that lay hidden in creation waiting for her.

What is one story? A mere provocation of another.

"Do tell us another, father. That was *so* short."

"Yes, Doctor—do tell us some more," said Alice, and then, coloring a little, she said—"Rose can have them every day, but I cannot,—only once in a great while."

"Alice, you must make your father tell *you* stories."

"He does, sometimes, but they are always out of books, and almost always Bible stories, and I know them by heart already."

After Dr. Wentworth had regaled himself enough with the children's charming arts of coaxing, he began another story:

THE FAIRY FLOWER.

"Once there was a little girl whose name was Clara. She had a very kind heart, but she was an only child and had been petted so much that she was like to become very selfish. Too late her mother lamented that she had indulged her so much, and strove to repair the mischief, and to make Clara think of other people's happiness, and not solely of her own. On some days nothing could be more charming than Clara's ways. She was gentle and obliging, and sang all day long, and made every one who came near her happy by her agreeable manners. Then every body admired her, and her mother and aunt were sure that she was cured of her pettish dispositions. But, the very next day, all her charming ways were exchanged. She carried a moody face. She was no longer courteous, and every one who came near her felt the chill of her manner, as if an east wind were blowing with her breath. One summer night, after such a miserable day, Clara went to her room. The moon was at its full, and poured through the window in such floods that she needed no other light. Clara sat down by the window very unhappy. She thought over the day, and wondered at herself, and tried to imagine why it was that on some days she was so happy and on others so wretched. As she mused she laid her head back on the easy chair. No sooner had she shut her eyes, than a strange thing happened. An old man, very feeble, came in, and in his basket, which he seemed hardly able to bear, was a handful of flowers and two great stones. He came to Clara and said, 'My daughter, will you help me, for I am too old to carry this load; please make it lighter?' Then Clara looked at him with pouting, and said, 'Go away!' Then he said, 'I am poor and suffering. Will you not lighten my load?' Then Clara con-descended to take the flowers out of his basket. They were very beautiful, and she laid them in her lap.

"The old man said:

"'My daughter, you have not lightened my basket—you have only taken the pleasant things out of it, and left the heavy, heavy stones. Oh, please lift one of them out of the basket!'

"Then Clara was angry, and said:

"'No, get you gone—I will not touch those dirty stones.'

"No sooner had she said this, than the old man began to change before her, and became so bright and white, that he looked like a column of crystal. Then he took one of the stones and cast it out of the window and it flew and flew and flew, and fell down on the eastern side of a grove, where the sun shone first every morning—and close by it ran a brook that laughed and loitered and sported all day and all night, and played with every thing that would come to it.

"And then the crystal old man took the flowers out of her lap, and they were wet with moisture, and he shook them over her head, and said:

"'Change to a flower! Go and stand by the stone, till your shadow shall be marked upon the rock.'

"In a second, Clara was growing by the side of a wide flat stone, and the moon cast the shadow of a beautiful flower, with long and slender stem, upon the rock. She was very wretched, and the dew came and comforted her, and in the morning she could not help looking at herself in the brook, that came close up to the stone, and she saw how beautiful she was. All day her shadow fell on the rock, and when the sun went away the shadow went away too. All night she threw a pale shadow on the rock, and in the morning, when the moon went away, the shadow went away too. And the rock lay still, all day and all night, and did not care for the flower, nor feel its shadow. And she longed, and longed, and longed; but what could a tender flower do with a hard rock? And the flower asked the brook, 'Can you help me?' And the brook laughed out louder than it was laughing before, and said, 'Ask the birds.' And so she asked a Bobolink, and he came frisking to her, with a wonderful speech, in Latin, Greek and Syriac, with some words from the great language that was before all other languages. And he alit upon the flower, and teetered up and down, till she thought her back would break; but nothing could she learn how to make her shadow stay upon the rock.

"Then she asked a spider; and he spun a web from her bright blossoms, and fastened it to the rock, and bent her over, and tied her up, till she feared she should never get loose. But all his nice films did her no good, and her shadow would not stay upon the rock.

"Then she asked the wind to help her, and the wind blew away the spider's web, and blew so hard that the flower lay its whole length upon the rock, but when the wind left her and she rose up, there was no shadow there.

"And she said—'What is beauty worth, if it grows by the side of a stone that does not feel it, nor care for it?'

"Then she asked the dew to help her. And the dew said, 'How can I help you? I live contentedly in darkness. I put on my beauty only to please other things. I let the sun come through my drops, though I know it will consume me.'

"The flower said, 'I wish I were dew. I would do some good. Now my beauty does me no good, and I am wasting it every day upon a rock.' When the flower breathed this benevolent wish, there were flutters and whispers all around, but the flower thought it was only the brook.

"The next day came that way a beautiful girl. She was gathering ferns, and mosses, and flowers. Whenever she saw a tuft of moss she said, 'Please, dear moss, may I take you?' And when she saw a beautiful branch with scarlet leaves, she said, 'Dear bush, may I take these leaves?' And then she saw a beautiful Columbine growing by the edge of a rock, and she said, 'Oh, sweet Columbine, may I pluck you?' And the flower said, 'Please, I must not go till my shadow is fastened on the rock.' Then the young lady took from her case a pencil and in a moment traced the shadow of the Columbine upon the rock, and when she had done she reached her hand and took the stem low down and broke it off. Then Clara sprang up from her chair by the window, and there stood her mother, saying:

"'My dear daughter, you should not fall asleep by an open window, not even in summer, my child. How damp you are! Come, hasten to bed.'

"It was many days before Clara could persuade herself that she had only dreamed. It was many months before she told the dream to her mother. And when she did, her mother said:

"'Ah, Clara, would that all girls might dream, if only it made them as good as your dream has made you.'"

The doctor seemed quite interested in his own story, and sat silent for a moment, that the good impression might settle in the girls' minds. He was awakened to attention by some little flutter. and saw Rose nodding in a gravely humorous way to Alice, as if she meant to say:

"I hope, Alice, that you will take this lesson to heart, and never be naughty again!"

"Ah, rogue Rose!" said the doctor. "Is that the way you pay me for my trouble? You shall——"

Rose, without waiting for the whole sentence, darted off, and in an instant the doctor was in full chase, while Alice, hesitant, followed in the distance, half laughing, and quite uneasy lest some harm should come to Rose. Harm did come. She was, after nimble turns and skilful evasions, so amused at her father's mishap in rushing upon a sweet-brier, when he thought to have seized her, that her strength dissolved in laughter. She was caught, and her hands tied with honeysuckle vines, and her neck was bound with flowers, and so she was carried away captive, smothered with sweets, to be punished under the great tree. There her father pronounced the sentence, that for irreverence and rebellion, she should be doomed to hear another story, which he called

COMING AND GOING.

"Once came to our fields a pair of birds that had never built a nest nor seen a winter. Oh, how beautiful was every thing! The fields were full of flowers, and the grass was growing tall, and the bees were humming everywhere. Then one of the birds fell to singing, and the other bird said: 'Who told you to sing?' and he answered: 'The flowers told me, and the bees told me, and the winds and leaves told me, and the blue sky told me, and you told me to sing.' Then his mate answered: 'When did I tell you to sing?' And he said: 'Every time you brought in tender grass for the nest, and every time your soft wings fluttered off again for hair and feathers to line the nest. Then his mate said: 'What are you singing about?' And he answered: 'I am singing about every thing and nothing. It is because I am so happy that I sing.'

"By-and-by five little speckled eggs were in the nest, and his mate said: "Is there any thing in all the world as pretty as my eggs?" Then they both looked down on some people that were passing by, and pitied them because they were not birds, and had no nests with eggs in them. Then the father-bird sung a melancholy song because he pitied folks that had no nests, but had to live in houses.

"In a week or two, one day, when the father-bird came home, the mother-bird said: 'Oh, what do you think has happened?' 'What?' 'One of my eggs has been peeping and moving! Pretty soon another egg moved under her feathers, and then another, and another, till five little birds were born!

"Now the father-bird sung longer and louder than ever. The mother-bird, too, wanted to sing, but she had no time, and so she turned her song into work. So hungry were these little birds, that it kept both parents busy feeding them. Away each one flew. The moment the little birds heard their wings fluttering again among the leaves, five yellow mouths flew open so wide that nothing could be seen but five yellow mouths!

"'Can any body be happier?' said the father-bird to the mother bird. 'We will live in this tree always, for there is no sorrow here. It is a tree that always bears joy.'

"The very next day one of the birds dropped out of the nest and a cat ate it up in a minute, and only four remained; and the parent-birds were very sad, and there was no song all that day nor the next. Soon the little birds were big enough to fly, and great was their parents' joy to see them leave the nest and sit crumpled up upon the branches. There was then a great time! One would have thought the two old birds were two French dancing-masters,—talking and chattering, and scolding the little birds, to make them go alone. The first bird that tried flew from one branch to another, and the parents praised him, and the other little birds wondered how he did it! And he was so vain of it that he tried again, and flew and flew, and couldn't stop flying, till he fell plump down by the house-door; and then a little boy caught him and carried him into the house,—and only three birds were left. Then the old birds thought that the sun was not bright as it used to be and they did not sing as often.

"In a little time the other birds had learned to use their wings, and they flew away and away, and found their own food and made their own beds, and their parents never saw them any more!

"Then the old birds sat silent, and looked at each other a long while.

"At last, the wife-bird said:

"'Why don't you sing?'

"And he answered:

"'I can't sing—I can only think and think!'

"'What are you thinking of?'

"'I am thinking how every thing changes,—the leaves are falling down from off this tree, and soon there will be no roof over our heads; the flowers are all gone, or going; last night there was a frost; almost all the birds are flown away, and I am very uneasy. Something calls me, and I feel restless as if I would fly far away."

"'Let us fly away together!'

"Then they rose silently, and, lifting themselves far up in the air, they looked to the north,—far away they saw the snow coming. They looked to the south,—there they saw green leaves! All day they flew, and all night they flew and flew, till they found a land where there was no winter—where there was summer all the time; where flowers always blossom, and birds always sing.

"But the birds that stayed behind found the days shorter, the nights longer, and the weather colder. Many of them died of cold; others crept into crevices and holes, and lay torpid. Then it was plain that it was better to go than to stay!"

Rose was going on seven years old. Never did girl give less cause of anxiety. Never did girl excite more anxiety in a mother's heart than did Rose in Agate Bissell's. Why should it be? Was not Rose healthy? Was she not of fine disposition? Of good parentage, with careful training, with every advantage that wealth could procure, what possible reason had Agate for her seriousness and anxieties?

There are many people who seem to regard anxiety as a religious duty. They seem to think that no state of mind is substantial which is not ballasted with cares.

If Agate Bissell expected to pass her life in Dr. Wentworth's family, to be Mrs. Wentworth's confidential companion, and to divide with her the care of the household, and to bestow every faculty of mind, soul and body on the children,—for Rose was not a solitary flower, but only the first bud that blossomed,—why should she *not* be anxious, and inflict upon herself all that unnecessary pain that is usually deemed proper by painstaking people? Why should she not imagine evils that never will happen, and reflect with self-reproach upon things done that might have been better done? Why not be discouraged, and imagine that the doctor would certainly spoil the children? or that some nameless and unknown evil would yet spring up and devour them? What *do* angels do with unnecessary anxieties? What clouds of needless prayers are daily floated upward which never distil in rain!

But it is not just to imagine that Agate had no other reason for seriousness of mind than this vague anxiety. She was not only a Christian in disposition, but she firmly believed the Christian teachings of Dr. Buell. Until Rose was converted there were no right affections in her. She had been taught that natural excellences, amiable dispositions, in unregenerate people, have no moral excellence, and do not diminish that perpetual danger which overhangs every child of Adam until he becomes a Christian. Many hold these views, but few *believe* them. Agate was among the few that believed. What to her was the body, its health and happiness, compared with the soul? What was it to her that Rose was lovely, docile, and obedient, if in her heart, concealed yet, but sure to be disclosed, there was that fatal taint, left on all the first parents' posterity?—that latent enmity which one day would flame out against her Maker?

This it was that made Rose a perpetual burden to Agate Bissell, and that had often wet her pillow with tears and drawn out prayers without number.

"Rose, my dear child, what good can it do you to love all the world that God has made, its clouds and seasons, its forests and fields, if you do not love God who made them all?"

Rose looked Agate full in the face, but sat silently.

"You know, my child," said Agate, "that to make much of the world, and nothing of God who made it, is idolatry. Your soul cannot be saved, Rose, by the clouds, or by the mountains If you could find your Saviour in nature——"

Agate paused, for Rose walked to her side, and placing her arms around her neck, said:

"Agate, I do love the Saviour. I think of him every day, and ask him to love me. Father says that there is nothing made that Jesus did not make."

A new anxiety now took possession of Agate. Might it not be true that this child had been blessed? If so, then she was guilty of that offending one of those little ones, against which such solemn words were pronounced. On the other hand, might not this young creature, so beautiful, so engaging, be snared and deceived? Was she not, by her father's influence, liable to substitute a diluted sentimentalism for the sober realities of a true religious experience?

Agate had often talked with Mrs. Wentworth on this subject; but she was so much in sympathy with her husband's opinions, that Agate doubted whether her judgment was clear and unbiassed.

It is not strange, then, that Agate in a manner sounded Mrs. Polly Marble on this general subject.

"Mrs. Marble, do you think that people can be converted without knowing the time?"

"Well, Agate, when the Lord delivered my soul it was just as if I had been sittin' in a dark room and somebody had opened the door right against the sun. Not know the time? I shall never forgit it, I guess! I know there's some folks think different. Them Episcopal folks say that children git good gradually. But I say that if a man don't know the times and seasons of his own heart, he likely hasn't had much religion anyhow."

"But do you suppose a work of grace can exist in the soul, and the person not know that it is grace?"

"I tell you what, Agate, if it's the Lord that converts men, I guess they'll know it, and other folks will be apt to know it too! Men are naturally like bags full of weed-seeds. The Lord firs shakes 'em empty, and then fills 'em up with precious wheat. Now it stands to reason that if the Lord is shakin' a man inside out he'll know it."

"But, Mrs. Marble, may not the Lord in his Sovereignty deal gently with young people? Is not that the meaning of the Scripture, 'He shall carry the young in His arms?'"

"Agate, I always say that it's best to be on the sure side. It never does harm to find fault with your evidences, 'cause if they are real you won't hurt 'em, and if they are deceivin' you, you will be apt to find it out. People now-a-days git religion too easy. I was under conviction nigh about two months. I was awfully striven with afore I give up. Young people now seem to git along too easy, I say. They don't bear any yoke, nor carry much of a cross. I have seen folks have measles light, and scarlet-fever so easy they didn't hardly know it. But I shall never be made to believe that any body took religion so easy that they didn't know they had it."

"Don't you sometimes doubt the promises," said Agate, "when you see how children turn out that's well brought up? Some folks neglect their children, let them do pretty much as they please, and yet they grow straight up, are converted, come into the church, and do well all their lives; then again, others are taught and governed, and restrained, and watched in every particular, and yet the moment they get free they go out into the world and grow as wicked as if nothing had been done for them. I don't know—it's a mystery to me!"

"A mystery!" said Aunt Polly Marble, pushing her spectacles a little closer to her eyes, and looking through them with a doubly earnest look, "there is no mystery about it. It's all election. That does it!"

Agate seemed troubled in countenance, and said:

"I wish I knew more about that doctrine. If one only knew who was elected, we could feel easy. And if a man was not elected, there would be no need of spending much time on him. Working for men that are not among the elect is like sewing without any thread in your needle; a good deal of work, and nothing to show for it."

"It's a precious doctrine though, even if you don't understand it. *You* may not know, but the Lord does, and it doesn't become us to be too pryin'."

"Yet, I think a mother might be excused for being anxious about her own children. If any body ever did offer a child up to God, I have that child! If she was my own flesh and blood, I could not do more for Rose!"

"Don't you think her father might do a little more to help out? He may be pious—I wouldn't judge. But he seems to me to walk in a pretty broad path, and to find a good many notions not likely to grow in the narrow way."

"He has his own views, and thinks he's right. He reads the Bible a good deal, and wants Rose to. But he's got so many things in his head that you can't find in the Bible, that I don't know what'll become of Rose. I'm afraid her soul will be snared with worldly knowledge."

"Why don't you talk with Dr. Buell? He is safe and a sound man, and likely he could tell you something about bringing up children."

"Dr. Buell is better at sermons than children," said Agate, with some decision. "That boy of his is a perfect limb. I don't know why it is, but some good folks are unlucky with their children. They take a deal of pains with them, and learn them every thing that's good, and the minute the children get a chance, they learn themselves every thing that's bad!"

This conversation did not bring to faithful Agate's heart much comfort.

Meanwhile, Rose, the subject of so much anxiety, lived in unbroken joyfulness. Hers was one of those fortunate natures that receive benefit from all, and injury from none. She lived loving and happy among the various persons who surrounded her. She loved the exact and faithful Agate; she loved the mild and gentle Mother Taft; she loved the boisterous ways of shrewd Tommy Taft; she loved and somewhat feared the simple but stately manners of Dr. Buell; she loved her mother dearly, but her father above all. Yet this seemed to her scarcely like loving another. So perfectly were father and daughter in sympathy, that it hardly needed words to interpret between them. They seemed like one soul in two bodies.

CHAPTER XVII.

A NEW-ENGLAND SUNDAY.

TIME waits for no man, and least of all for story writers. Our readers must move six years forward at a step, and rest for one Sunday in Norwood, where travelling on Sunday is yet against the law.

It is worth all the inconveniences arising from the occasional over-action of New-England Sabbath observance, to obtain the full flavor of a New-England Sunday. But for this, one should have been born there; should have found Sunday already waiting for him, and accepted it with implicit and absolute conviction, as if it were a law of nature, in the same way that night and day, summer and winter, are parts of nature. He should have been brought up by parents who had done the same thing; as *they* were by parents even more strict, if that were possible; until, not religious persons peculiarly, but every body,—not churches alone, but society itself, and all its population, those who broke it as much as those who kept it—were stained through with the color of Sunday. Nay, until Nature had adopted it, and laid its commands on all birds and beasts, on the sun and winds, and upon the whole atmosphere, so that, without much imagination, one might imagine, in a genuine New-England Sunday of the Connecticut river valley stamp, that God was still on that day resting from all the work which he had created and made, and that all his work rested with him!

Over all the town rested the Lord's peace! The saw was ripping away yesterday in the carpenter's shop, and the hammer was noisy enough. To-day there is not a sign of life there. The anvil makes no music to-day. Tommy Taft's buckets and barrels give forth no hollow, thumping sound. The mill is silent—only the brook continues noisy. Listen! In yonder pine woods what a cawing of crows! Like an echo, in a wood still more remote other crows are answering. But even a crow's throat to-day i musical. Do they think, because they have black coats on, that they are parsons, and have a right to play pulpit with all the pine trees? Nay. The birds will not have any such monopoly,—they are all singing, and singing all together, and no one cares whether his song rushes across another's or not. Larks and robins, blackbirds and orioles, sparrows and bluebirds, mocking cat-birds and wrens, were furrowing the air with such mixtures as no other day but Sunday, when all artificial and human sounds cease, could ever hear. Every now and then a bobolink seemed impressed with the duty of bringing these jangling birds into more regularity; and, like a country singing-master, he flew down the ranks, singing all the parts himself in snatches, as if to stimulate and help the laggards. In vain! Sunday is the birds' day, and they will have their own democratic worship.

There was no sound in the village street. Look either way—not a vehicle, not a human being. The smoke rose up soberly and quietly, as if it said—It is Sunday! The leaves on the great elms hung motionless, glittering in dew, as if they too, like the people who dwelt under their shadow, were waiting for the bell to ring for meeting. Bees sung and flew as usual, but honey-bees have a Sunday way with them all the week, and could scarcely change for the better on the seventh day.

But oh, the Sun! It had sent before and cleared every stain out of the sky. The blue heaven was not dim and low, as on secular days, but curved and deep, as if on Sunday it shook off all incumbrance which during the week had lowered and flattened it, and sprang back to the arch and symmetry of a dome. All ordinary sounds caught the spirit of the day. The shutting of a door sounded twice as far as usual. The rattle of a bucket in a neighbor's yard, no longer mixed with heterogeneous noises, seemed a new sound. The hens went silently about, and roosters crowed in psalm-tunes. And when the first bell rung, Nature seemed overjoyed to find something that it might do without breaking Sunday, and rolled the sound over and over, and pushed it through the air, and raced with it over field and hill, twice as far as on week days. There were no less than seven steeples in sight from the belfry, and the sexton said: "On still Sundays I've heard the bell, at one time and another, when the day was fair, and the air moving in the right way, from every one of them steeples, and I guess likely they've all heard our'n."

"Come, Rose!" said Agate Bissell, at an even earlier hour than when Rose usually awakened—"Come, Rose, it is the Sabbath"

We must not be late Sunday morning of all days in the week. It is the Lord's day."

There was little preparation required for the day. Saturday night, in some parts of New-England, was considered almost as sacred as Sunday itself. After sundown on Saturday night no play, and no work, except such as is immediately preparatory to the Sabbath, were deemed becoming in good Christians. The clothes had been laid out the night before. Nothing was forgotten. The best frock was ready; the hose and shoes were waiting. Every article of linen, every ruffle and ribbon, were selected on Saturday night. Every one in the house walked mildly. Every one spoke in a low tone. Yet all were cheerful. The mother had on her kindest face, and nobody laughed, but every body made it up in smiling. The nurse smiled, and the children held on to keep down a giggle within the lawful bounds of a smile; and the doctor looked rounder and calmer than ever; and the dog flapped his tail on the floor with a softened sound, as if he had fresh wrapped it in hair for that very day. Aunt Toodie, the cook, (so the children had changed Mrs. Sarah Good's name,) was blacker than ever and shinier than ever, and the coffee better, and the cream richer, and the broiled chickens juicier and more tender, and the biscuit whiter and the corn-bread more brittle and sweet.

When the good doctor read the Scriptures at family prayer, the infection of silence had subdued every thing except the clock. Out of the wide hall could be heard in the stillness the old clock, that now lifted up its voice with unwonted emphasis, as if, unnoticed through the bustling week, Sunday was its vantage ground, to proclaim to mortals the swift flight of time. And if the old pedant performed the task with something of an ostentatious precision, it was because in that house nothing else put on official airs, and the clock felt the responsibility of doing it for the whole mansion.

And now came mother and catechism; for Mrs. Wentworth followed the old custom, and declared that no child of hers should grow up without catechism. Secretly, the doctor was quite willing, though openly he played off upon the practice a world of good-natured discouragement, and declared that there should be an opposition set up—a catechism of Nature, with natural laws for decrees, and seasons for Providence, and flowers for graces! The younger children were taught in simple catechism. But Rose, having reached the mature age of twelve, was now manifesting her power over the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and as it was simply an achievement of memory and not of the understanding, she had the book at great advantage, and soon subdued every question and answer in it. As much as possible, the doctor was kept aloof on such occasions. His grave questions were not to edification, and often they caused Rose to stumble, and brought down sorely the exultation with which she rolled forth "they that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them."

"What do those words mean, Rose?"

"Which words, pa?"

"Adoption, sanctification and justification?"

Rose hesitated, and looked at her mother for rescue.

"Doctor, why do you trouble the child? Of course, she don't know yet all the meaning. But that will come to her when she grows older."

"You make a nest of her memory, then, and put words there, like eggs, for future hatching?"

"Yes, that is it exactly; birds do not hatch their eggs the minute they lay them. They wait."

'Laying eggs at twelve to be hatched at twenty is subjecting them to some risk, is it not?"

"It might be so with eggs, but not with catechism. That will keep without spoiling a hundred years!"

"Because it is so dry?"

"Because it is so good. But do, dear husband, go away, and not put notions in the children's heads. It's hard enough already to get them through their tasks. Here's poor Arthur, who has been two Sundays on one question, and has not got it yet."

Arthur, aforesaid, was sharp and bright in any thing addressed to his reason, but he had no verbal memory, and he was therefore wading painfully through the catechism like a man in a deep, muddy road, with this difference, that the man carries too much clay with him, while nothing stuck to poor Arthur. Great was the lad's pride and exultation on a former occasion when his mother advanced him from the smaller Catechism to the dignity of the Westminster Catechism. He could hardly wait for Sunday to begin his conquests. He was never known after the first Sunday to show any further impatience. He had been four weeks in reaching the fourth question, and two weeks already had he lain before that luminous answer, beating on it, like a ship too deeply laden, and unable to cross the bar.

"What is God, Arthur?" said his mother.

"God is—is a—God is--and God—God is a —— "

Having got safely so far, the mother suggests "spirit," at which he gasps eagerly. "God is a Spirit."

"Infinite," says the mother.

"Infinite," says Arthur.

And then blushing and twisting in his chair, he seemed unable to extract any thing more.

"Eternal," says the mother.

"Eternal," says the boy.

"Well, go on; God is a spirit, infinite, eternal;—what else?"

"God is a spirit, eternal, infinite,—what else?"

"Nonsense," says the startled mother.

"Nonsense," goes on the boy, supposing it to be a part of the regular answer.

"Arthur, stop! what work you are making!"

To stop was the very exercise in Catechism at which he was most proficient; and he stopped so fully and firmly that nothing more could be got out of him or into him during the exercise. But his sorrow soon fled, for the second bell had rung, and it was just time to walk, and "every body was going," the servant reported. The doctor had been called away, and his wife and the children moved down the yard,—Rose with demure propriety, and Arthur and his eight-year-old brother, Charles, with less piety manifest in deportment, but, on the whole, with decent demeanor. The beauty of the day, the genial season of the year, brought forth every one—old men and their feebler old wives, young and hearty men and their plump and ruddy companions,—young men and girls and children, thick as punctuation points in Hebrew text filled the street. In a low voice, they spoke to each other in single sentences.

"A fine day! There'll be a good congregation out to-day."

"Yes; we may expect a house full. How is Widow Cheney—have you heard?"

"Well, not much better; can't hold out many days. It will be a great loss to the children."

"Yes; but we must all die—nobody can skip his turn. Does she still talk about them that's gone?"

"They say not. I believe she's sunk into a quiet way; and it looks as if she would go off easy."

"Sunday is a good day for dying—it's about the only journey that speeds well on this day!"

There was something striking in the outflow of people into the street that, till now, had seemed utterly deserted. There was no fevered hurry; no negligent or poorly dressed people. Every family came in groups—old folks and young children; and every member blossomed forth in his best apparel, like a rose-bush in June. Do you know that man in a silk hat and new black coat? Probably it is some stranger. No; it is the carpenter, Mr. Baggs, who was racing about yesterday with his sleeves rolled up, and a dust-and-business look in his face! I knew you would not know him. Adams Gardner, the blacksmith,—does he not look every inch a judge, now that he is clean-washed, shaved, and dressed? His eyes are as bright as the sparks that fly from his anvil!

Are not the folks proud of their children? See what groups of them! How ruddy and plump are most! Some are roguish, and cut clandestine capers at every chance. Others seem like wax figures, so perfectly proper are they. Little hands go slyly through the pickets to pluck a tempting flower. Other hands carry hymn-books or Bibles. But, carry what they may, dressed as each parent can afford, is there any thing the sun shines upon more beautiful than these troops of Sunday children?

The old bell had it all its own way up in the steeple. It was the licensed noise of the day. In a long shed behind the church stood a score and half-score of wagons and chaises and carryalls,—the horses already beginning the forenoon's work of stamping and whisking the flies. More were coming. Hiram Beers had "hitched up," and brought two loads with his new hack, and now, having secured the team, he stood with a few admiring young fellows about him, remarking on the people as they came up

"There's Trowbridge—he'll git asleep afore the first prayer's over. I don't b'lieve he's heerd a sermon in ten years. I've seen him sleep standin' up in singin'.

"Here comes Deacon Marble,—smart old feller, ain't he?—wouldn't think it, jest to look at him! Face looks like an ear of last summer's sweet corn, all dried up; but I tell ye he's got the juice in him yit. Aunt Polly's gittin' old, aint she? They say she can't walk half the time—lost the use of her limbs; but it's all gone to her tongue. That's as good as a razor, and a sight better 'n mine, for it never needs sharpenin'.

"Stand away, boys, there's 'Biah Cathcart. Good horses—not fast, but mighty strong, just like the owner."

And with that Hiram touched his new Sunday hat to Mrs. Cathcart and Alice; and as he took the horses by the bits, he dropped his head and gave the Cathcart boys a look of such awful solemnity, all except one eye, that they lost their sobriety. Barton alone remained sober as a judge.

"Here comes 'Dot-and-Go One' and his wife. They're my kind o' Christians. She is a saint, at any rate."

"How is it with you, Tommy Taft?"

"Fair to middlin', thank'e. Such weather would make a handspike blossom, Hiram?"

"Don't you think that's a leetle strong, Tommy, for Sunday? P'raps you mean afore it's cut?"

"Sartin; that's what I mean. But you mustn't stop me Hiram. Parson Buell 'll be lookin' for me. He never begins till I git there."

"You mean you always git there 'fore he begins?"

Next, Hiram's prying eyes saw Mr. Turfmould, the sexton and undertaker, who seemed to be in a pensive meditation upon all the dead that he had ever buried. He looked upon men in a mild and pitying manner, as if he forgave them for being in good health. You could not help feeling that he gazed upon you with a professional eye, and saw just how you would look in the condition which was to him the most interesting period of a man's earthly state. He walked with a soft tread, as if he was always at a funeral; and, when he shook your hand, his left hand half-followed his right, as if he were about beginning to lay you out. He was one of the few men absorbed by his business, and who unconsciously measured all things from its stand-point.

"Good-morning, Mr. Turfmould! How's your health? How's business with you?"

"Good—the Lord be praised! I've no reason to complain."

And he glided silently and smoothly into the church.

"There comes Judge Bacon, white and ugly," said the critical Hiram. "I wonder what he comes to meetin' for. Lord knows he needs it, sly, slippery old sinner! Face 's as white as a lily; his heart's as black as a chimney flue afore it's cleaned. He'll get his flue burned out if he don't repent, that's certain. He don't believe the Bible. They say he don't believe in God. Wal, I guess it's pretty even between 'em. Shouldn't wonder if God didn't believe in him neither."

Hiram's prejudices were perhaps a little too severe. The judge was very selfish, but not otherwise bad. He would not do a positively bad deed if he could help it; but he neglected to do a great many good ones which other men with warm hearts would have done. But he made up in manner whatever he lacked in feeling Dressed with unexceptionable propriety, his whole bearing was dignified and kind. No man in the village spoke more musically and gently; no one met you with a greater cordiality. His expressions of kind wishes, and his anxiety to serve you, needed only a single instance of hearty fulfilment to make Judge Bacon seem sincerely and unusually kind. But those who had most to do with him found that he was cold and selfish at heart, inflexible and unfeeling when seeking his rights or interests; and his selfishness was the more ghastly as it clothed itself in the language and manners of gentle goodwill.

"He talks to you," said Hiram, "just as Black Sam lathers you; a kind of smooth rubbing goes on, and you feel soft and satisfied with yourself, and sort o' lean to him, when he takes you by the nose and shaves, and shaves, and shaves, and it's so smooth that you don't feel the razor. But I tell you, when you git away your skin smarts. You've been shaved.

"Here come the Bages, and the Weekses, and a whole raft from Hardscrabble," said Hiram, as five or six one-horse wagons drove up. At a glance one could see that these were farmers who lived to work. They were spare in figure, brown in complexion—every thing worn off but bone and muscle—like ships with iron masts and wire rigging. They drove little nubbins of horses, tough and rough, that had never felt a blanket in winter or known a leisure day in summer.

"Them fellers," said Hiram, "is just like stones. I don't believe there's any blood or innards in 'em more'n in a crowbar. They work early, and work all day, and in the night, and keep workin', and never seem to get tired except Sunday, when they've nothin' to do. You know when Fat Porter was buried, they couldn't git him into the hearse, and had to carry him with poles, and Weeks was one of the bearers, and they had a pretty heavy time of it, nigh about three hours, what with liftin' and fixin' him at the house, and fetchin' him to the church door, and then carryin' him to the graveyard, and Weeks said he hadn't enjoyed a Sunday so much he couldn't tell when.

"'Hiram,' sez he, 'I should like Sunday as well as week days if I could work on it; but I git awful tired doin' nothin'.'

"They say," said Hiram, "that they never do exactly die up in Hardscrabble. They work up and up, and grow thinner and thinner like a knife-blade, till they git so small that some day they accidentally git misplaced or dropped, and nobody misses 'em. So that they die off in a general way, like pins, without any one of 'em making a particular fuss about it. But I guess that ain't so," added Hiram, with a grave air, as if fearing that he might mislead the young folks about him. Then, with demure authority, he said: "Boys, go in; the bell's done tollin', and meetin's goin' to begin. Go in, and don't make a noise, and see you tell me where the text is. I've got to look after these horses, or they'll get mixed up."

This remark was called forth by a squeal and a rattle and backing of wagons, which showed that mischief was already brewing.

Having got the people all safely into church, Hiram bestowed his attention on the horses. The whole green was lined with horses. Every hitching-post, and the railing along the sidewalk and at the fronts of the stores, were closely occupied.

Seeing Pete leaning on Dr. Wentworth's gate, Hiram beckoned him over, and employed him in his general tour of inspection as a bishop might employ his chaplain. Here the reins had been pulled under a horse's feet, next a horse had got his bridle off; another had backed and filled till the wagon wheels were cramped; and at each position, Hiram issued orders to Pete, who good-naturedly, and as a matter indisputable, did as he was ordered. If Hiram had told Pete to shoulder one of the horses, he would have made the attempt.

"Look here, Pete, if that ain't a shame, then there ain't no truth in the ten commandments! A man that'll drive a horse with a sore shoulder like that is a brute. Just feel how hot it is,—Pete, you get a bucket of water, and put a little warm in it to take off the chill, and wash that off, and take him out of harness,—I swow!—and I don't know but I ought to say I swear! for it's Sunday work. Anyhow, if Blakesley don't know any better than that, he ought not to own a horse. There he is in church a hearin' the Gospel, and feelin' all over as comfortable as a cruller, and he's left his horse out here to the flies and the sun, with a shoulder that's a disgrace to Christianity. But that's the way with us pretty much all 'round. If we are good here, we are bad there. Folks's good and bad is like a board-teeter,—if one end goes up, t'other is sure to go down."

It was curious to see Pete's superiority to Hiram in the matter of dogs. In several wagons lay the master's dog, and Hiram was not permitted to approach without dispute; but there was not a dog, big or little, cross or affectionate, that did not own the mysterious power that Pete had over animals. Even dogs in whom a sound conscience was bottomed on an ugly temper, practised a surly submission to Pete's familiarity.

It was nearly twelve o'clock. when Dr. Wentworth, returning from his round of visits, found Hiram sitting on the fence, his labors over, and waiting for Dr. Buell to finish.

"Not in church, Hiram? I'm afraid you've not been a good boy."

"Don't know. Somebody must take care of the outside as well as inside of church. Dr. Buell rubs down the folks, and I rubs the horses; he sees that their tacklin' is all right in there, and I do the same out here. Folks and animals are pretty much of a muchness, and they'll bear a sight of takin' care of."

"Whose nag is that one, Hiram,—the roan?"

"That's Deacon Marble's."

"Why, he seems to sweat, standing still."

Hiram's eye twinkled.

"You needn't say nothin', Doctor,—but I thought it a pity so many horses shouldn't be doin' any thing! Of course, they don't know any thing about Sunday,—it aint like workin' a creatur' that reads the Bible,—so I just slipped over to Skiddy's widder—she ain't been out doors this two months, and I knew she ought to have the air—and I gave her about a mile! She was afraid 'twould be breakin' Sunday.—'Not a bit,' says I; 'didn't the Lord go out Sundays, and set folks off with their beds on their backs; and didn't He pull oxen and sheep out of ditches, and do all that sort of thing?' If she'd knew that I took the Deacon's team, she'd been worse afraid. But I knew the Deacon would like it; and if Polly didn't, so much the better. I like to spite those folks that's too particular!—There, Doctor, there's the last hymn."

It rose upon the air, softened by distance and the enclosure of the building,—rose and fell in regular movement. Even Hiram's tongue ceased. The vireo, in the tops of the elm, hushed its shrill snatches. Again the hymn rose, and this time fuller and louder, as if the whole congregation had caught the spirit. Men's and women's voices, and little children's, were in it. Hiram said, without any of his usual pertness:

"Doctor, there's somethin' in folks singin' when you are outside the church that makes you feel as though you ought to be inside. 'Mebbe a fellow will be left outside, up there, when they're singin'—if he don't look out."

When the last verse had ended, a pause and silence ensued. Then came a gentle bustle, a sound of pattering feet. Out shot a boy, and then two or three, and close upon them a bunch of men. The doors were wide open and thronged. The whole green was covered with people, and the sidewalks were crowded.

Tommy Taft met the minister at the door, and put out his great rough hand to shake.

"Thankee, Doctor—thankee; very well done. Couldn't do it better myself. It'll do good—know it! Feel better myself; I need just such preachin'—mouldy old sinner—need a scourin about once a week. Dreffful wicked to hev such doctrine, and not be no better—ain't it, Doctor?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED

We are not to suppose, in a New England town, that the measure of a sermon's effect is to be judged by the impression immediately produced upon the audience. There are usually in every large church in a New England town several families of great refinement and trained to scholarly thought. But, aside from these, there are scores of plain men who have from their very infancy been trained to read, think, and discuss moral problems often the most remote from ordinary life. Many of these homely and awkward bodies carry in them fine machinery. A sermon, therefore, falls upon such an audience as the waters do upon mill-wheels. However much it may sparkle and rush upon the great external wheel, that is but a small part of the effect produced. The whole interior is set in motion—spindles twirl, looms clank, and the whole building is filled with buzzing activity.

When the congregation breaks up, they carry out the subject with them. It probes them, excites them, sharpens them; and in scores of homes for the day and week, around the table, young and old controvert, defend, or variously follow out the Sunday sermon. In this way the community is seasoned with religious thought. Even if sometimes a too exclusively doctrinal discourse draws upon itself the charge of being unpractical, it can seldom be charged with emptiness or mere sentimentalism. There is apt to be food in it for men. Let us listen to some of the comments.

Judge Bacon walks with Mr. Gallup—and knowing that Mr. Gallup would repeat whatever he said, and that it would speedily reach the minister's ears, he remarks:

"An excellent performance. The grounds were well taken, the proofs judiciously arranged, and the application timely. I was a very clever performance. As a specimen of special pleading, I think it would have ranked high in any court."

"Father," said his daughter, "do you believe in the *doctrine?*"

"Well, my daughter, in things so mysterious and profound as the conditions of Final Perseverance, it may be presumptuous to say that we believe—at any rate, further than we understand—but one may fitly say that were such a doctrine conceived as being true, Dr. Buell has undoubtedly presented it to-day in its most admirable manner."

Squire Yates, who never put his foot in a church from year's end to year's end, was waiting at Judge Bacon's door for a moment's interview:

"Well, Judge, been to church, eh? Believe every word? What was it—election, dependence, or sovereignty?"

"Tut, tut," said Judge Bacon, smiling knowingly, "it was on the perseverance of saints. I have concluded to persevere. You should have heard it—it was likewise profitable for sinners.—What did you hear of our matters in New York? Is the failure bad? Shall we secure much for our clients?"

"Oh, Aunt, I wish our minister didn't preach such long sermons," said a blooming girl of twelve to a sensible but rigid and conscientious aunt, Miss Eccleston, who was not only determined to be good, but fiercely determined; and just as determined that every body that she had any thing to do with should be good, too. She was angular and something stern outwardly, but true as steel within; straightforward, truthful, and as unbounded in kindness as she was energetic in duty.

"My dear," said she, emphatically, "you don't go to church to be easy. That isn't what religion is for. It is to stir us up. We are naturally lazy. I don't believe in plush cushions in the pew nor plush sermons in the pulpit. Feathers! feathers! is the ruin of many souls. The rod is what folks need."

"But, Aunt, don't you think a sermon that interests you does more good than one that don't?"

"My dear, you *ought* to be interested. Dr. Buell didn't make the truth—God made it. The minister's business is to give it to the people as he finds it, and it's their business to be interested."

An older niece modestly asked:

"Well, Aunt, if the minister has only to give us the truth as he finds it, why, then, does he not read the Bible, and stop?"

"Why, what's got into you, children? I don't think it is an improving spirit for people to criticise what they hear, and find fault with the sermon. There's enough in every one of 'em, if we were in a right state of mind, to do us good. It is bad manners to find fault with your food at table, and a good deal worse at church."

The Cathcarts went to the Wentworths'. On a plain table stood some crackers and cheese, some plain gingerbread, and a plate of butter, while fragrant tea drew all eyes toward the head of the table.

Cathcart, in a very clear and concise manner, stated to the doctor the substance of the sermon. He applauded it as an intellectual effort, but inclined to doubt if it was strictly scriptural.

"I am inclined to think that the Arminian and Calvinist, when not under controversial fire, hold the facts substantially alike. The issue is not necessary, is forced, is abstract, which divides them on this point. I am inclined to think high doctrinal preaching is less often useful than some suppose."

"There are two sides to that, Cathcart," said Wentworth, "New England metaphysics have been a powerful agent against materialism. It may be that at any given time, a high doctrinal sermon is not so edifying as a simple practical one would be. But a community brought up, through a hundred years, to task their thought upon themes remote, difficult, and infinite, will be far nobler than if they had been fed upon easy thought. Something is always to be considered in such discussions, not only as to the effect of preaching on the immediate conduct, but also as to a slower, though even more important effect, upon that whole moral constitution and mental habit which is the grand fountain and source of conduct."

"But do you not see churches worn out and wasted with such dry discussion?"

"The fault is not in the idea, but in the execution. Either extreme becomes unfruitful. High philosophic thought may, and should, lead to broad practical applications."

"I see what you mean. True doctrinal preaching, though it lies high, should, like clouds, before it gets through, come down to the ground in rain."

"Exactly. Look at the history of New England mind in a large way. I think we owe every thing to her theologians, and most to the most doctrinal. They were shut out from the world—in danger of becoming provincial and narrow. The outlet was found—not in cosmopolitan social customs, nor in art or literature—but in the ology. Such men as Edwards, Hopkins, Smalley, West, Bellamy, Backus, Burton, Emmons, lifted up the New England mind into a range of speculation and conviction that ennobled and strengthened it as art never could have done."

"You are right; but I don't see what you can do with your consistency, for I've heard you trim Dr. Buell to his face for his metaphysical sermons."

"Only for *word*-sermons; thought-sermons cannot be too high. But a tangle of reasonings made up mostly of nice distinctions of words is an imposition on philosophy. Buell does not often get into this vicious style. But I could show you good specimens of what I call vermicular sermons—a mere snarl of words crawling over and over each other, all through the nest."

"But what if a minister preaches real thoughts, but leaves them without application?"

"He is like a man who draws a bucket of water from a deep, deep well,—like yours, for instance, sixty feet deep,—good water, clear, cold, wholesome; and, just as he brings the bucket up within a few feet of the curb, he fastens it there, where you can't reach it, and leaves you thirsty. A cup of water that you cannot reach is as far off from you two feet below the face of the well as if it were at the bottom again!"

Farmers, having looked at their horses, and given them a wisp of hay, or a few oats, were sitting about in groups, talking of various things, but every one of them, first or last, had something to say of the sermon. Many a quaint originality was dropped unnoticed. Many a homely illustration was suggested full of real poetry without its form. Some, of better information, and habits of reading, led off into criticisms on the one side, or defences on the other, which showed that, however dry to some, the doctor had reached the minds of others, and set them in earnest activity.

Hiram had gone his rounds and now joined the group; and having learned the subject of the sermon, he expressed himself promptly:

"Them pesky Methodists is gittin' in this town, and preachin' up fallin' from grace, and ridiculin' election. Now them Calvin doctrines belongs to this town. They've always growed here You might as well cut down these old elm trees, and put up some of your new-fangled spindlin' trees that look like brooms bottom upward, as to set out these Methodist notions here."

"Well, Hiram, don't you believe a man *can* fall from grace?"

"He's no business to; he ought to keep right along—that's my notion."

"But that ain't to the pint. *Can't* a Christian man fall from grace?"

"It's my notion that if a man is once convarted, he'll stay convarted. If he's got grace, he'll keep it."

"You mean it will keep him."

"If a man falls, and it don't hurt him much, it shows that there wan't no grace about it; 'twas something else he fell from, that wan't very high up neither. A fellow's apt to be smashed up, if he falls from grace, I tell ye! It's like fallin' off the south side of Mount Holyoke."

The more thoughtful men refused to discuss the cases in real life that some instanced. It was a mere question of Scripture. If the Bible said so it was so, and we must submit our reason to God's Word.

It was allowed that there were some passages that *looked* liked falling from grace. But they were speedily captured by ranks of others; and as there was no one present who cared to be thought Arminian, the discussion soon waned, and was finally closed by Hiram, who laid it down with emphasis:

"They haven't no Scripture on their side. They just *do* it, and then think they've proved it; but that ain't worth shucks for argument."

As soon as the afternoon service was over every horse on the green knew that it was time for him to go home. Some grew restless and whinnied for their masters. Nimble hands soon put them into the shafts, or repaired any irregularity of harness. Then came such a scramble of vehicles to the church door, for the older persons; while young women and children, venturing further out upon the green, were taken up hastily, that the impatient horses might, soon as possible, turn their heads homeward. Clouds of dust began to arise along every outward-going road. In less than ten minutes not a wagon or chaise was seen upon the village green. They were whirling homeward at the very best pace that the horses could raise. Stiff old steeds vainly essayed a nimbler gait, but gave it up in a few rods, and fell back to the steady jog. Young horses, tired of long standing, and with a strong yearning for evening oats, shot along the level ground, rushed up the little hills, or down upon the other side, in the most un Sunday-like haste. The scene was not altogether unlike the return from a military funeral, *to* which men march with sad music and slow, but *from* which they return nimbly marching to the most brilliant quick-step.

In half an hour Norwood was quiet again. The dinner, on Sunday, when for the sake of the outlying population the two services are brought near together in the middle of the day, was usually deferred till the ordinary supper hour. It was evident that the tone of the day was changed. Children were not so strictly held in. There was no loud talking, nor was laughing allowed, but a general feeling sprung up around the table that the severer tasks of the day were ended.

Devout and age-sobered people sat in a kind of golden twilight of meditation. The minister, in his well-ordered house, tired with a double service, mingled thoughts both glad and sad. His tasks were ended. He was conscious that he had manfully done his best. But that best doing, as he reflected upon it, seemed so poor, so unworthy of the nobleness of the theme, and so relatively powerless upon the stubborn stuff of which his people's dispositions were made, that there remained a vague, unquiet sense of blame upon his conscience.

It was Dr. Wentworth's habit to walk with his family in the garden, early in the morning and late in the afternoon. If early, Rose was usually his company; in the afternoon the whole family, Agate Bissell always excepted. She had in full measure that peculiar New England feeling that Sunday is to be kept by staying in the house, except such times as is spent at church. And, though she never, impliedly even, rebuked the doctor's resort to his garden, it was plain that deep down in her heart she thought it an improper way of spending Sunday; and in that view she had the secret sympathy of almost all the noteworthy villagers. Had any one, upon that day, made Agate a visit, unless for some plain end of necessity or mercy, she would have deemed it a personal affront.

Sunday was the Lord's day. Agate acted as if any use of it for her own pleasure would be literal and downright stealing.

" We have six days for our own work. We ought not to begrudge the Lord one whole day."

Two circumstances distressed honest Agate's conscience. The one was that the incursion of summer visitors from the city was tending manifestly to relax the Sabbath, especially after the church services. The other was that Dr. Wentworth would, occasionally, allow Judge Bacon to call in and discuss with him topics suggested by the sermons. She once expressed herself in this wise:

"Either Sunday is worth keeping or it is not. If you do keep it, it ought to be strictly done. But lately Sunday is ravelling out at the end. We take it on like a summer dress, which in the morning is clean and sweet, but at night it is soiled at the bottom and much rumpled all over."

Dr. Wentworth sat with Rose on one side and her mother on the other, in the honeysuckle corner, where the west could be seen, great trees lying athwart the horizon, and chequering the golden light with their dark masses. Judge Bacon had turned the conversation upon this very topic.

"I think our Sundays in New England are Puritan and Jewish, more than Christian. They are days of restriction rather than of joyousness. They are fast days, not feast days."

"Do you say that as a mere matter of historical criticism, or do you think that they could be improved practically?"

"Both. It is susceptible of proof that the early Christian Sunday was a day of triumph and of much social joy. It would be well if we could follow primitive example."

"Judge, I am hardly of your opinion. I should be unwilling to see our New England Sunday changed, except, perhaps, by a larger social liberty *in* each family. Much might be done to make it attractive to children, and relieve older persons from *ennui*. But, after all, we must judge things by their fruits. If you bring me good apples, it is in vain to abuse the tree as craggy, rude, or homely. The fruit redeems the tree."

"A very comely figure, Doctor, but not very good reasoning. New England has had something at work upon her beside her Sundays. What you call the 'fruit' grew, a good deal of it at any rate, on other trees than Sunday trees."

"You are only partly right. New England character and history are the result of a wide-spread system of influences of which the Sabbath day was the type—and not only so, but the grand motive power. Almost every cause which has worked benignly among us has received its inspiration and impulse largely from this One Solitary Day of the week.

"It is true that all the vegetable growths that we see about us here depend upon a great variety of causes; but there is one cause that is the condition of power in every other, and that is the Sun! And so, many as have been the influences working at New England character, Sunday has been a generic and multiplex force, inspiring and directing all others. It is, indeed, the *Sun's* day.

"It is a little singular that, borrowing the name from the heathen calendar, it should have tallied so well with the Scripture name, the Lord's day—that Lord who was the Morning Star in early day, and at length the Sun of Righteousness!

"The Jews called it the Sabbath—a day of rest. Modern Christians call it the *Sun's* day, or the day of light, warmth and growth. If this seems fanciful so far as the names of the day are concerned, it is strikingly characteristic of the real spirit of the two days, in the ancient and modern dispensation. I doubt if the old Jews ever kept a Sabbath religiously, as we understand that term. Indeed, I suspect there was not yet a religious strength in that national character that could hold up religious feeling without the help of social and even physical adjuvants. Their religious days were either fasts or like our Thanksgiving days. But the higher and richer moral nature which has been developed by Christianity enables communities to sustain one day in seven upon a high spiritual plane, with the need of but very little social help, and without the feasting element at all."

"That may be very well for a few saints like you and me, Doctor, but it is too high for the majority of men. Common people find the strict Sundays a great annoyance, and clandestinely set them aside."

"I doubt it. There are a few in every society that live by their sensuous nature. Sunday must be a dead day to them. A dark room. No wonder they break through. But it is not so with the sturdy unsophisticated laboring class in New England. If i came to a vote, you would find that the farmers of New England would be the defenders of the day, even if screwed up to the old strictness. Their instinct is right. It is an observance that has always worked its best effects upon the common people, and if I were to change the name, I should call Sunday THE POOR MAN'S DAY.

"Men do not yet perceive that the base of the brain is full of despotism, and the coronal brain is radiant with liberty. I mean that the laws and relations which grow out of men's relations in physical things are the sternest and hardest, and at every step in the ascent toward reason and spirituality, the relations grow more kindly and free.

"Now it is natural for men to prefer an animal life. By-and-by they will learn that such a life necessitates force, absolutism. It is natural for unreflecting men to complain when custom or institutions hold them up to some higher degree. But that higher degree has in it an element of emancipation from the necessary despotisms of physical life. If it were possible to bring the whole community up to a plane of spirituality, it would be found that there and there only could be the highest measure of liberty. And this is my answer to those who grumble at the restriction of Sunday liberty. It is only the liberty of the senses that suffers. A higher and nobler civil liberty, moral liberty, social liberty, will work out of it. Sunday is the common people's Magna Charta."

"Well done, Doctor! I give up. Hereafter you shall see me radiant on Sunday. I must not get my hay in, if storms do threaten to spoil it, but I shall give my conscience a hitch up, and take it out in that. I must not ride out. But, then, I shall regard every virtuous self-denial as a moral investment with good dividends coming in by-and-by. I can't let the children frolic in the front door yard; but, then, while they sit waiting for the sun to go down, and your *Sun*-day to be over, I shall console myself that they are one notch nearer an angelic condition every week. But, good-night, good-night, Mrs. Wentworth. I hope you may not become so spiritual as quite to disdain the body. I really think, for this world, the body has some respectable uses yet. Good-night, Rose. The angels take care of you, if there is one of them good enough."

And so the judge left.

They sat silently looking at the sun, now but just above the orizon. A few scarfs of cloud, brilliant with flame-color, and every moment changing forms, seemed like winged spirits, half revealed, that hovered round the retiring orb.

Mrs. Wentworth at length broke the silence.

"I always thought, Doctor, that you believed Sunday over strictly kept, and that you were in favor of relaxation."

"I am. Just as fast as you can make it a day of real religious enjoyment, it will relax itself. True and deep spiritual feeling is the freest of all experiences. And it reconciles in itself the most perfect consciousness of liberty with the most thorough observance of outward rules and proprieties. Liberty is not an outward condition. It is an inward attribute or, rather, a name for the quality of life produced by the highest moral attributes. When communities come to that condition, we shall see fewer laws and higher morality.

"The one great poem of New England is her Sunday! Through that she has escaped materialism. That has been a crystal dome over head, through which Imagination has been kept alive. New England's imagination is to be found—not in art, or literature—but in her inventions, her social organism, and, above all, in her religious life. The Sabbath has been the nurse of that. When she ceases to have a Sunday, she will be as this landscape is—now growing dark, all its lines blurred, its distances and gradations fast merging into sheeted darkness and night.

"Come, let us go in!"

CHAPTER XIX.

GOING TO COLLEGE

Barton Cathcart was brought up on a farm, by a farmer, with no other thought than that he would, like his father, live by steady and hard work. Early he manifested ambition, but it developed in the line of his duties. Thoroughly above his years, industry and fidelity marked him from childhood. His tenacity of purpose was remarkable, and had it not been controlled by judgment, in later years it would have become obstinacy.

He was ambitious of doing men's work, and, at ten years of age, in labor that required tact and quickness rather than strength, he was fully as serviceable as a man. He was eager to prove himself tough, refused in the coldest winter to wear an overcoat, rejoiced to brave storms, and regarded the reputation of being a good farmer as praise enough.

His winters were given to schooling, and his father's example at home bred in him a love of reading. When he was about fourteen, there began to rise in his mind dim questionings whether he should after all follow husbandry. The books which he had read furnished so many heroes that he found his allegiance to hard work somewhat shaken. Sometimes he dreamed that he would be a merchant, and that after a successful life, he would return and build in his native village.

Then he pondered within himself whether he might not by study become a lawyer. His mind had been inflamed with admiration by some trials that had gone on in Norwood, and he caught the contagion of the common people, who look upon a smart lawyer as one of the most enviable of men.

But all these dreams were as nothing to the influence of a single question which Rose put to him one Sunday evening at her father's:

"Barton, don't you mean to go to college?"

"No; I never really thought of it. What makes you ask me?"

"I should like to go myself. I should like to know every thing.

But women don't go to college. If I were a man I should certainly go."

"What would you do then, Rose?"

"I don't know. I could tell better afterwards. Don't you think that you would like to be a minister, Barton?"

There are some impressions that come upon us with the force of prophecies. Barton had never before once thought of a college, except as a vague picture, a place of wonderful men who knew all manner of wonderful things. Like a true New England boy, he looked with admiration upon any young man that "had been to college." Intelligence and morality are the household ideals of New England. The Amherst College buildings he had seen as they glimmered far across the Connecticut river valley, and had often vaguely striven in imagination to picture the contents of those buildings, very much as old crusaders may be imagined to have wondered at Jerusalem afar off.

These few words of Rose had struck a chord which never ceased vibrating. He thought of it all the way home. Every day he found the subject intruding upon him. Finally, it had so possessed his feelings that his farm work no longer seemed his chief ambition, and he found himself following his tasks with less spring and pleasure than hitherto; and dangerous signs, even of weariness and impatience, appeared.

At length he determined to break his thoughts to his mother—confident that, though she might repress his new desires, she would yet sympathize with his ambition to rise in the world. Great then was his surprise, when, one evening, he made a full disclosure of his thoughts, to find that Rachel was neither astonished nor averse.

It was an evening when his father was away in town, and the house was still. Barton said to his mother:

"Mother, do you think I ought to go to college?"

She paused, and looked fixedly and kindly upon her son; she then went on with her work in silence for many minutes—so many minutes that Barton thought it an hour, though it was not a quarter of it. He sat with the book which he had been reading on his knee, and his forefinger in it for a mark, looking into the fire.

What other picture-book has such color, such infinite novelty of design, such suggestiveness as the farmer's picture-book on the andirons? There were flames shooting up like spires of churches in the colors of sunset. On the front log was a mimic hunting-scene. Along the surface ran a faint line of blue gas, issuing at little intervals from cracks; and this seemed like rabbits or foxes. Then from the end of the log a flame like a hound; it leaped over and caught the gas, and raced across the whole front and disappeared, as if around a corner. Barton's uneasy thoughts were well nigh as fitful and fiery as the flames before him. He glanced at his mother. She was excited too. Her eye was bright, a color was on her cheek, her hand was more nervously quick.

Rachel came, at length, and sat down by him.

"Barton, your words seem to me like an opening door. On one side is the home, and purity and security; on the other the great and wide world, full of all manner of life and danger. You have always seemed to me as one that would remain here. But already your thoughts have gone; and by and by you will follow. I am willing. Yet the day you leave us will be a day of pangs more than when you were born."

"Mother, I will not go if you wish me to stay. I can give it up."

"When God stirs in us deep thoughts for things that are right, they are prophecies, and we must heed them. Should I keep you back and hide you from God's decrees, could I prevail? If we follow duty willingly, we are treated kindly; but if we resist, Duty hunts us down and drags us to answer to our conscience."

Then both were silent. Barton was looking at the coals under the fore-log. There was one spot that seemed making signs to him. The dull yellow red of the coal suddenly glowed with white light as if a stream of air had fanned it, then sunk back to its ruddy hue; it glanced out white and radiant again, and lost the glow once more, as if it kept sympathy with Barton's thoughts, that rose and sunk by turns.

"Oh, my son, I know not why God has shaded life to my eyes His will be done! Life seems so deep, so awful in meaning, and infinite—infinite in its results. It is like an ocean, with great storms travelling over it always, and many enemies. Yet every one must venture. If I were sure that you had made your peace with God——"

She paused.

The fore-stick broke in two, and showers of sparks rushed up the fireplace, and great meaty coals rolled down upon the hearth, while the whole fire seemed to ease itself, and settled down into new positions, as if a restraint had been removed.

It was a relief to both of them, and Barton put a new forestick in place, laid back the brands, and with the tongs raked the great bed of coals right and left under the logs, as if to clear out its throat and give the fire breathing-room.

"But, my son, have you thought whether you will be able to succeed?"

"Mother, I have not spoken a word to father about it."

"I did not mean that. Should your father consent? You are not yet fifteen. You have learned only the common branches of an English education. It is two miles to the Academy. You will have to study at least two years before you can enter college. If your father should give you your time and help you besides, he would expect you to help yourself. You know his mind. If he had ever so much money, he would not give it to you. He thinks that the earning is a moral preservation. It will require patience and courage to get an education."

"I have patience and courage," said Barton, quietly. "Did you ever know me give up any thing that I had undertaken? Did not father say that he didn't believe any body else would ever have got down that wood, on the mountain-lot, in the deep snow, that I did? But he never knew half that I went through. Didn't I finish that piece of wall that father said nobody could do in two days? But you didn't know, nor he either, that I went out after you were abed, and worked all night, by the moon. It was four o'clock in the morning when I quit. There's something in me that won't let go when I take hold in earnest. I can't help it!"

"But an education is only a beginning, what do you mean to do afterwards?"

"I don't know. If a man is well educated, I guess he can do pretty much as he pleases. May be I'll be a lawyer or a minister."

"Or a doctor, Barton?"

He was silent. The fire had lost much of its zeal, and lay like a rich community, with great banks of hot coals; while, here and there, a brand that had fallen the wrong way, like a disappointed man in society, lay smoking,—white on the outside with ashes, and black with charcoal within.

The conversation was interrupted by the sounds in the yard. Barton started up for the lantern, and sprang out to relieve his father of the horse, which he always put up of himself, unless relieved by some such proffered service of his children.

It was some days before the subject was resumed in the family; and then 'Biah Cathcart introduced it.

"Barton, your mother says you want to go to college. I hav no objection, if you think you are smart enough. You canno enter college without examination. My farm is as honorable in its way as a college. I sha'n't let any one brought up here leave it without standing an examination. If you choose to learn surveying and will give me a plot of my farm and a map of this district, I'll give you your time. It won't do for a farmer's boy to go to college, and not to know more about land than if he came from a city."

His father said nothing to him of books, and nothing of a teacher. Barton was too proud to ask any help—at any rate at home. He knew his father's notions, and he knew that he was expected to find out his own way, and to master the art and mystery of surveying by his own wit and ingenuity.

He said to himself:

"Where shall I begin? Well—I must find that out myself. How shall I find it out? What book will tell me? I suppose I've got *that* to find out too. If there is no book, then I must get somebody to tell me, and I *will* too, or I'll know the reason why."

Barton's first step was to explore his father's library. Among the several hundred volumes he remembered vaguely to have seen a book with land surveying in it. But whether the art of surveying was large and difficult, or simple and easy, he could not tell. Accordingly he examined every book in his father's book-cases. Here were Scott's and Henry's Commentaries on the Scriptures. Here were a few law books. There were histories, ancient and modern, sacred and profane. A very good selection of English classics, and a few translations of the ancients. There was a good row of voyages, travels and biographies. The largest number of books was in the department of Natural History and in the ar and science of farming, on which his father's reading had been extensive. There was also Rees' Cyclopædia, and a few of Scott's and Cooper's novels; but no book on surveying.

"*Was* there not one? Had it been removed purposely? Was it loaned? I don't care—there are books *somewhere*, and I'll find out where."

Old 'Biah knew what was going on, but never spoke a word. "We are apt to put too many blades in our knives, now-a-days," said he. "I had rather give the boy a handle, and let him put in his own blade. There is nothing like working out a thing yourself. Lead is as good as steel when the knife is in your pocket. Put it to hard work and see which keeps its edge—that tells the difference between good temper and none at all."

When they were working in the field, if his boys asked him a question that came within their own powers of investigation, he would say—"A man should be ashamed to ask questions of others that he can answer himself. What was your head given for but to use?" In this way his children were early inclined to observe and study for themselves.

But once, when Barton had been to Springfield, and returned by a different route, having to visit several outlying neighbors on business, he lost his way, and was detained a night. His father would not take the excuse.

"If a man has got a tongue in his head there is no need of missing his way in a populous country. Ask questions!"

A spirit of independence could scarcely fail to grow up under such influences, and when, through inexperience, it tended to extremes, old Cathcart would say: "He is independent who troubles people the least, and helps them the most. Never let any body carry you or your burdens if you can help it. But always be ready to carry other people's, if they need it."

After a vain search, Barton seemed baffled. At last, a happy thought struck him.

"I'll ask Tommy Taft; he's an old sailor and has studied navigation; maybe surveying and navigation are enough alike for him to help me."

CHAPTER XX.

CONSULTATIONS.

THE next night, not long after dark, a knock was heard at Tommy Taft's shop-door. Tommy was sitting in his rough old chair, that seemed to have been once a part of a pork-barrel. The front had been sawed away half-way down, leaving the rest of the staves for a back; and a seat was laid across the open part; and the whole was covered with some cheap stuff, so that it answered the purpose of luxury far better than do most of the chairs which seem designed to make visitors so uncomfortable that their calls shall be short.

"Who's there?—come in!" roared out Tommy, laying down his pipe.

But several reasons precluded obedience to the vociferous command which he repeated. In the first place, the door below was fastened; and, in the next place, had Barton made good his entrance, his way among barrels and benches, shavings and timber, was not like to be smooth or easy.

Mother Taft lit a candle, saying, with a woman's and a nurse's apprehension:

"I am afraid Ma'am Whipple's child is worse. They were to send if they needed me."

The stairs came down into the corner of the shop. Loosening the rude wooden bolt, she opened the door.

"Why, Barton Cathcart, of all things in the world! What is the matter? Is your mother sick? Is any thing the matter at home?"

"Nothing, Mother Taft," said he, hastening to relieve her honest anxiety. "I only came down to see Tommy about some business."

By this time Tommy's wooden leg was busy up stairs, pounding and slapping, at each step, as he made toward the head of the stairs. Each step shook every board in the floor, as if a flail or rather trip-hammer, were at work on a wager.

As Barton came in sight, Tommy seemed enraptured.

"Why, boy,—why, lad, come up here! Let me get my hands on you—that's all! Come up here, my chap, if you dare,—just come up here!"

And no sooner was the act done than Tommy seized him in his arms, as if he had been a pet dog; and shook him, and laughed at him, and toddled him off towards the fire, rubbing his shoulders, as if he were rolling out a piece of pie-crust.

"Why, where did you come from? What's the matter? What do you want, my hearty? Any mischief up, eh? Any thing broke? Any thing smashed? What is it, I say; what's the matter?" And without waiting for an answer, he plumped Barton into his own barrel seat, with an emphasis which threatened to carry them both over upon the floor, and quite overthrew Uncle Tommy's familiar, in the shape of a huge, yellow, crop-ear cat, that sat dozing by the fire. "Clap on some more stuff, woman. Let's have more fire. Nights are nights, now, d'ye know! Skates broke, eh?—No?—Gun out of order? Traps gone?—No?—Well, what is it? Didn't come from Parson Buell, did ye? Had my dose last week. Good man. Looks after the old sinner. He needs it. Have to keep tryin' the pumps. Some day, afore you know it, he'll founder No hope. Bad business. Wicked old sinner. But what have you come for, I tell you?"

"Why," said Barton, laughing, "if you'll keep still long enough for me to speak, Tommy, I'll tell you."

"Sartin, sartin. I don't want to talk—go on. Somethin's the matter, I know Come down to-night. No, no—not for nothin'. I know. Come, jest tell us what it is; and don't keep an old fellow with his anchor neither up or down. But, boys will be boys," said Tommy, giving Barton an affectionate slap on his knee.

"Well," said Barton, striking in resolutely, as one who means to make his way in a crowd, "I want to find out something, and I don't know who to go to, Tommy; and I thought perhaps you would know."

"Of course I know. What's an old sailor good for but to know all the odds and ends, and crinkum-crankums for young folks? The only jolly folks in this world are young folks that ain't good for nothin' yet, and old folks that's past doin' much. All the rest of the world are livin' in a pucker and a fume all the time. I tell you, Barton, I'm the only sensible man in this town. Did ye ever see such a stewin' and brewin' as goes on for nothin' among these folks, that are rubbin' and grindin' round to make money, and then usin' it to make more money, and that to make more, and haven't time to stop and enjoy it a little!"

There is no telling to what lengths of discourse Tommy would have gone, for he seemed in peculiarly good spirits to-night, at Barton's visit. Barton was one of Tommy's prime favorites.

But the old fellow was a good deal puzzled when the erran came out.

"Tommy, I want to learn something about surveying. I'm going to college."

"Thunder and lightnin'! Goin' to college? Make a map to find your way from here to Amherst, eh?"

"Father is so 'fraid that his children will depend on somebody for something, that he never acts as other folks do. He wants me to show that I am in earnest, and he in a sort puts me on a *stent;* and so I've got to learn something about surveying, to let him see that I've got spunk enough to study; and I won't ask father any thing about it," said Barton, laughing, "not if I have to invent surveying all over again. Now I thought that as you knew about navigation, you could perhaps tell me enough about surveying to give me a start. But don't tell father."

"Well, if that ain't the beat all! I never 'spected to be a schoolmaster, and have folks cum to me for larnin'. Why, Barton, I don't know nothin' about it. Navigation, boy, I guess is a sort of a surveyin' bottom side up. I mean that it is studyin' out the stars and findin' out where you are. But, Lord bless you, that won't help you on dry land, and if 't would, I couldn't help you. Why don't you just go over to Edwards? They say he's big on mathematics."

"That's a good idea," said Barton. "I wonder I never thought of that. Now I come to think of it, I know that he has surveyed a good deal. He was out a while when they were running the lines for the railroad."

Tommy had been pulling away at a bag in a closet, and now brought out some hickory nuts, and was proceeding to fill a tin pan with them, when Barton cut short his hospitable intent. Go he must. His errand must be speedily performed. The night was wearing, and it would not do to be late.

"But why on airth don't you ask your father, Barton? I guess he could tell you as well as any body."

"You know my father, Tommy. He's queer about some things He's always stirring us up to find out things. He seems set not to tell us any thing that we can dig out ourselves."

"That's the old man all over. But good for you—good for you—make you smart—wake you up—keep you sharp."

"He wouldn't tell me the name of a flower, but made me hunt it down in a Botany. He wouldn't tell me why the moss grew on one side of a tree more than on the other, but set me to find out. If I were to ask him about surveying he would say,—What have you done yourself to find out? As soon as he sees that I am in earnest, and have tried to help myself, he'll help me."

"And is he as strict with Alice?" asked Mother Taft, who had listened silently to the conversation.

"Yes—but rather softer. But she has to hunt the dictionary for her words, and he won't let her read a sentence that contains a place or river, or custom, that he don't question her; and if she don't know, he expects her to find out, and to find out, too, how to find out."

"And how does Alice like it?"

"Oh, she's smart, to father's heart's content. She has got so keen that you can't catch her very easy. You see that's a habit that grows on one. And after a while it is just as easy, and a little easier, to find out your own things as to be depending on other people to find them out for you. But I must be off. Much obliged for your nuts. I'll put some in my pocket. What big ones!—splendid! You always know where the best trees are, Tommy."

"No, that's Pete's work. Pete knows every nut, and every squirrel, and every berry that grows in these parts. You see my leg does very well to walk with; a little noisy, perhaps, especially when you are late to meetin' and walk up the aisle in prayer time; but it's no use on a chestnut tree. A wooden leg is a good thing though, Barton; never have to cut my toe-nails on that leg," said Tommy, with a chuckle. "Not much paid out for shoes neither. Go to a blacksmith for my shoes—ho! ho! ho! Never have rheumatism in that leg neither. Don't catch cold when I git it wet. Toes never cold on that leg—he! he! he! No corns. Nobody steps on my toes Don't cost much for blackin'. It's a real convenience Sometimes I think legs were a mistake; ain't worth as much as it costs to keep 'em up."

"I suppose, then, you regret having one well leg, Tommy?"

"Of course I do. Often think of havin' it taken off. Very odd, you see, to have one flesh leg and one wooden leg. Feller don't like to be odd, ye know," said Tommy, winking at Barton, as if to save him from taking the speech literally. "So queer, you know, to wake up in the night and turn over just one leg! Then my old smasher makes such a noise that every body looks at that one, and I do believe my real leg gits jealous of the attention that's paid to the wooden one. The fact is, that wooden feller hasn't got much manners. Never could keep him still, and it's the worst leg to have treadin' on your toes that ever you saw."

As Tommy Taft thus ran on, his eye seemed to linger fondly upon Barton, and his rough voice grew less turbulent. All at once, turning to him, in a manner entirely changed, and full of rude tenderness, he said, in a simple way:

"And so, Barton, you really are going to college. Well, I didn't think it. You're going to college, and I shan't see you much more, my boy."

His manner was so new, and there was such a sort of helplessness in his way, that Barton was affected by it, and said:

"Why, Tommy, I shan't go this two years, and I shall be home every vacation, you know. It is only a few miles to Amherst, any how."

"It's all right. If a boy's got any thing particular in him, it'll certainly git out, somehow, and it ain't much use to try to stop it. If you do, it'll only twist it and twirl it, like a seed with a board on it, that will come up and creep out sideways, and gits up in spite of hindrance, only with a cruel crooked stem. I might 'a made a smart man once, but they meddled with me, and I was fierce—well, no matter. Old Tommy missed it. But you won't. You'll be all right, Barton, boy! On the hull, I'm glad of it. Folks that stay to hum are like coasters—sloops and schooners like, that run along shore and do a peddlin' business in shoal water. Folks that go to college are square rigged. They can make long voyages, carry big freights, go round the world if they're mind to."

Tommy seemed likely to spend the night in talking, and Barton abruptly bid Mother Taft good-night, and climbed down stairs, while Tommy from the top was still adding some further remarks.

Mr. Edwards received Barton with a calm and dignified welcome, and expressed no surprise. He acted as one must who for forty years had been used to having boys come to him for every thing. He had been a schoolmaster all his life. Under his care the academy had earned a high position. The young men who fitted for college there were uniformly remarked for their thorough scholarship and industrious habits.

Mr. Edwards was tall, thin, with a large gray eye, which was mild and gentle in repose, but kindled like an eagle's under excitement; his face was white; his hair remained thick only around the sides of his head, while upon the top it was very thin, and every where gray. His habitual sobriety was underlaid with a genuine relish of humor, which seldom brought out a laugh, sometimes a smile, but usually only a lighting up of his whole face, and a look of good nature even kinder than usual. His long teaching had earned him a small property, which enabled him now to live in the inexpensive way which best pleased him. He had been once married, but early lost his wife, and never again thought of marrying. His whole life was her monument. And his love, never spoken, but never, after years and years, less tender, and fresh, and romantic, than in the days of his youth, burned like a lamp in some obscure chapel, fed by pious hands, unseen by day to the passers by, but in darkness and secrecy forever shining before the shrine.

A widowed sister was the only companion of his house. Her hands performed the whole labor of the household. Like her brother, she was intelligent; but, like him, she was not fond of talking. He conversed freely when solicited, but never offered conversation. And, when he did speak, there was something slightly formal—it was not pedantic, but measured, as if he were translating the sentences from another language into his mother tongue. Brother and sister were deeply attached to each other but would no more think of expressing it than two roses, on the same stem, would make love in any way except by glowing in the same light, carrying the same dew, and shaking to the same wind.

Every night, when the tea things were removed, the curtain dropped, the fire trimmed (and he was especially fond of a fire of hickory wood, the almost only luxury that he would have, regardless of expense), he took his book and she her work, and he would read aloud. Sometimes, when exciting events were abroad, it would be a newspaper; at other times the magazine. But, whatever he read, she heard; and thus they kept along together, in the same house, with the same pleasures, and in the silent enjoyment of the same ideas. Sometimes he would pause in reading, and for a moment comment, or criticise, or unfold his knowledge—which was ample—upon some obscure point. But, usually, little was said, even in long pauses, both reflecting in silence.

There is something very wonderful in the fruitfulness of silence! Congenial natures may learn almost to forego speech, and yet maintain intimate sympathy and knowledge of each other. There grow up, insensibly, an instinct and an intuition in the eye, in the ear, and in every sense, which finely divide up and distribute the usual functions of a noisy tongue.

In the morning she knocked at his door and said, "Dwight, breakfast waits." They sat silent during the meal. After morning prayers he made his record of the weather, of which he was a well-instructed scribe, performed some light task in his study—for he still kept up a student's habit—and read his classic authors, pen in hand, making in his journal such criticisms as occurred; or pursued mathematical studies, of which he had always been even more fond than of the languages. The dinner came every day at the good old hour of twelve, and passed silently. The afternoon was given to his garden and yard in summer, and to various quiet exercises, walks, and errands, in winter. The evening was for home and reading. There was no Sunday there. Every day was Sunday.

Except a slight difference on washing and ironing days, you might call every day of the week a Sabbath, so alike were they—all silent, meditative, and tranquil. Twice as much was going on up in the great elm trees which overshadowed the dwelling as within the house. Twice as much noise and racket did birds and crickets make in the garden, in summer, as ever was heard within the mansion. Their lives were as nearly spiritual as can be conceived. It is true that both of them had bodies, but they were subordinated to the mind's uses so utterly that they seemed to dry up and turn white, as if they despaired of their rights as fleshl bodies and were getting ready to take on a spiritual state, in shee despair.

"Come in, Barton! sit down. What brings you to town s late? No ill news, I trust?"

"Nothing, but some business with you, is the matter. I wanted to talk with you—about surveying—and about going to college."

"Why, Barton, are you going to leave the farm? I thought you were to be the great farmer of this neighborhood? What will your father say?"

"He is willing—at any rate, he has given consent."

"What put it into your head! The last time I talked with you, you were bent upon husbandry. It was to be a stock-farm,—grass, grain, cattle,—the finest grass, the plumpest grain,—the choicest stock,—mountain pastures,—great barns! All these are fled? Some new ambition?"

Barton did not acknowledge to himself the germ and spring of all these plans. He, perhaps, would have honestly denied their origin. So subtle are the influences that begin afar off to act upon us, that the condition and direction of our feelings are changed before we notice that we are acted upon. Only the last stages of mental processes, and especially emotive changes, become obvious. Many men see the growth of trees only when leaves are unfolded; but some notice the swelling of the bud. Yet more sensitive observers, before a bud swells, know by the purpling of the twigs and branches that a change has begun. But long before the ruddy color came, there was a stir within, and the march from winter to summer had begun. Barton knew that his plans of life were changed; but he did not go back to the real beginning to notice the silent impression made by Rose; nor did he even admit himself that Rose had any important influence upon his life o thoughts. That she was his sister Alice's very twin sister, as i were, he knew, and he called her *his* sister too.

Sister! sister!—that is a sweet word, but exceedingly mischievous, too, in the realm of love! It is a word for devout enthusiasm, for unselfish love, for unblushing friendship, for faithfulness and honest intimacy, for friendship without passion, for love without sultry ardors. Brother and sister! That is the most simple and beautiful confluence of the sexes!

But that word *sister* is the covered way of love! It is the mask which bashfulness wears before it gains boldness enough to say love. It is a gentle hypocrisy, under which souls consent to remain and dream, in hope by-and-by of a rapturous waking! It is the half-way house between friendship and ardent affection. It is a neutral ground, on which men and women agree to commit no offensive action, and where both parties make haste to break the agreement. Under the names brother and sister how fast intimacies grow! What bold words are spoken! What deep glances are exchanged! Love is war. The friendship of a brother and sister, unrelated, is a truce, in which both parties are secretly preparing for the onset and victory.

First comes acquaintance—that is May; then friendship—that is June; then brother and sisterhood—that is July; and then love, which is August; but July and August are so much alike that no one can tell when one stops and the other begins!

Barton unfolded to Mr. Edwards, briefly, his ambition to surprise his father, and received from him suitable information, the loan of necessary books, the invitation to come once or twice a week for recitation, and the promise that as soon as the season opened, Mr. Edwards would go out with him and give him practical lessons in the field.

The next Sunday found Barton, during the intermission of service, at Dr. Wentworth's. Nothing of his week's work did he speak. He had a natural delicacy of pride, and seldom spoke of himself—never of his inward feelings, save to his mother.

Rose did not question him. She walked with him into the green-house and stood among the plants, speaking of common things.

She instinctively knew that something had happened to Barton. His way was different. His carriage was different. She merely noticed it, and did not inquire or even reflect upon it. Yet Barton knew that she knew something ailed him, for she unconsciously looked at him with that gaze of her father's, as if she saw something opening up before her in his own heart. It was her rare sensitiveness to truth, which was peculiarly displayed toward Nature, but was as real, though less manifested, toward society, that gave to Rose an almost unerring insight of peoples' dispositions.

By her original constitution Rose was exquisitely susceptible of impressions, and her father's training had educated this tendency, so that she saw infinitely more, in looking upon the same things, than others did; heard and discriminated far more of the memorable sounds which fill the day, than did her companions. This world is not the same world to any two persons in it. But between the lowest human organization and the highest, the difference is so wide, that the world which each sees would not be recognized by the other. The thermometer and barometer are the perpetual witness of men's coarse and sensitive natures. They say to us every hour, "See what world-affecting changes are going on, which you are not fine enough to notice, but which we feel and indicate."

But the sphere of effects not perceived, in human life, is even greater than in the natural world. Every feeling which rises in the soul has its own signal in the body. If our eyes were fine enough, if our minds were sensitive enough, we should see the face and carriage of men going through endless variations, as the soul moves through all its affluent moods. Now we see only the extreme manifestations. Fear, rage, hate, love, mirth, are discernible at their full tides. Finer natures perceive their remote conditions, their subtle influences; but it is a feeling, a mere blind consciousness of change, or difference, rather than a defined perception.

Rose had to a singular degree this fine and ineffable sympathy with matter and with mind. She had it without being conscious of it. She was not aware that she lived far deeper into life than others did. Of all things that lived about her, herself was almost the only one which she did not take cognizance of.

She judged that Barton had something to say to her, and so she had naturally gone to the green-house. He said nothing to her, except of the plants, of the decline of the season, and so she felt that it was something not to be told. To know that one has a secret is to know half the secret itself.

When the afternoon service was done, Mr. Edwards walked on with Rose and her father and mother, on the way to his own house beyond.

"And so 'Biah Cathcart is going to send his son to college."

"Ah," said the Doctor, "that is something new. When did you hear it?"

"Barton came to see me last week. He is to come to the academy the next term, and thinks that in two years he can enter Amherst."

"Well, well, these boys run away with their father's plans, as kittens do with a knitter's ball of yarn—roll it all over the room and snarl it terribly!"

And so Rose now perceived what was the thing which she had felt—Barton was to go to college. She was glad. He would be scholar, for he always did conscientiously and well whatever he did. And he would be distinguished. Would he be a lawyer? Would he ever rise to public honors? Would he preach? Would he choose the fields of science? The dim and misty future lay before her as a horizon on which shapeless clouds took and lost form at the same moment. Of one feeling she was sure—she was glad for Barton. Her soul prophesied for him a noble life, and she was happy.

From the hour of his decision, Barton was consciously changed. A new life had opened. All things stood out in new relations. He was even more industrious and thorough in his daily work on the farm.

"I should not wonder, Rachel," said his father, "if Barton was sorry for his choice; now that he comes to think of leaving it he likes the farm better than he knew. He clings to his work as if he was sorry that he must leave it."

Rachel's sympathy interpreted Barton more accurately. She knew how a highly conscientious nature would fear the not doing well that which it was no longer doing for the love of it; and that the fear of slighting work, which one was consciously falling from, would redouble caution and endeavor.

"I don't think Barton is tired of work or that he would be sorry to stay; but I think he is glad to go. And since he is going to leave, he naturally is anxious lest he should slight any thing. Folks always take the most pains about the things that they are in danger of neglecting."

"That may be so of honest people, but not of the shiftless and lazy."

But there was something more which neither recognized. Barton was proud as well as faithful. There was a reason in himself which he felt, but never analyzed or understood, why he did faithfully what he did at all. There is a peculiar effect in self-esteem to impart a sense of one's own personality to whatever one touches, owns, or does. Barton's planning was for the time a part of his own self. His work was himself. Self-respect included not his mind and person alone, but whatever his person concerned itself about. And to slight his work was to slight himself.

And we should likewise add, what so many know, that he who has once learned to work with thoughtful interest and genuine ambition on a farm will never lose the enthusiasm. Every year men high in professional places—artists, judges, clergymen, senators, teachers—go back in vacation to the old homestead, and feel the old inspiration of Work. They swing the flail, they follow the plough, they swing the scythe, or axe, with enthusiasm, and often with secret wishes that they had never forsaken them; at any rate, with a half purpose of retiring from crowded ways and feverish pursuits to the calm and wholesome joys of husbandry.

All hail, Work! Man lost Paradise by the temptations that beset indolence. He will regain it again by those wholesome qualities which are the fruit of intelligent work. The curse, "thou shalt earn thy bread in the sweat of thy brow," was not a curse on work, but on *drudgery*. It is time that the curse on the ground should be worked out. There has been sweat enough to wash it clean. There have tears enough fallen down to make the earth sweet Work shall beautify it. Work shall drive out Drudgery and bring in Leisure, and then men shall eat their bread under cool shadows with unsweated brows.

CHAPTER XXI.

MENTAL PHILOSOPHY.—(TO BE READ OR SKIPPED.)

Long before the Amazon reaches the ocean, it has grown so wide that from the channel no shore can be seen on either side. It is still a river, but with all the signs and symptoms of becoming an ocean. There is a period, beginning not far from fourteen, in young lives when childhood is widened suddenly, and carries its banks so far out that manhood seems begun, though as yet it is far off. The stream is ocean deep. Upon this estuary of youth the currents are shifting—the eddies are many. Here are united the strength of the sea and the hindrances of the land.

The important organic changes which in our zone take place at the second full seven of years, produce important results even in the coldest temperaments and in the slenderest natures. But, in persons of vigor of body and strength of feeling, there is frequently an uprising like a city in insurrection. The young nature, swelling to the new influences with a sense of immeasurable strength—sometimes turbulent with passions, but always throbbing with excited feelings, led on and fed by tantalizing fancies,—seems transformed from its previous self, and becomes a new nature.

The mere access of impetuous feeling is not by any means the most striking change that occurs. There is frequently the appearance of new forces in the mind, the displacement of old ones, and an entire change of proportion and balance in the moral and intellectual faculties. A mild and docile boy springs up before his astonished parents defiant and unteachable. A conscientious and painstaking nature is seized with wilful impulses, and seems by an insane attraction drawn to bewildering courses.

On the other hand, lads of a soft and yielding nature sometimes stiffen and show an unexpected strength. Children who had early and chiefly acted from motives of approbation begin to feel the sterner and more wholesome law of pride. Faults fall off at once, against which nurse, mother, and teacher had labored assiduously and in vain.

New moral forces are developed into activity. Aspirations begin to quicken the soul. Ambitions grow nobler. A scorn of all authority which does not conform to reason or to generous views of duty is frequently seen, and just as frequently misunderstood. The exultation of hope and the deepest sadness of despondency alternate in the same bosom. There is also in some natures, in strange union, an intense sensibility to pleasure, with a wayward rejection of it as unsatisfying and unworthy.

The human soul, in this its real waking, is like the dawning of spring in the forest. All things good and bad are quickened alike. The dove comes, and the hawk also; the singing thrush, and the cawing crow; harmless insects, and stinging ones; innocent worms, and noxious reptiles! The spice-bush and the nettle; the fragrant blossoms, and ill-scented, poisonous weeds, all move together and break forth into life. But as every day the returning sun, moving higher, brings on the summer, the things comely and useful gain ascendency, and the forest and the field nourish treasures for the joy of man and beast. Here and there is a noisome morass which summer only makes pestilential. At remote intervals rare spots may be overgrown with poisonous plants or waste weeds; but these things are exceptional; and summer brings, in vast excess over incidental evil, the richest stores of inestimable benefit.

All natures come to their manhood through some experience of fermentation! With some it is a ferment of passions; with some, of the affections; and with richly endowed natures it is the ferment of thought and of the moral nature.

Wholesome labor is for this, as for a thousand other critical experiences of life, an antidote or a remedy. But what shall save one from that passage of the thoughts, that struggle of the moral nature, which lies between so many noble youth and their full manhood? Nothing! It may be adjourned, but sooner or later it comes. It may be masked, tempered, but a full and vital nature is weaned from boyhood with as many tears and sorrows as first he was weaned from his mother's breast.

Barton Cathcart escaped the constitutional disturbance of the passions partly by his inherent nature, partly by the influences of home and its education, and perhaps full as much by the wholesome moral influence of physical labor. But there slumbered elements in his soul which would yet awake, though the time was not come.

From his father Barton inherited strong common sense, sobriety of judgment, and a rarer gift, an instinctive sense of *what is true* which may coexist with an argumentative faculty and with logical power, but which is separable from both of them, and is superior to both. From his mother came imagination, and that subtle sympathy with invisible things which produces interiorness and depth of character.

Except with his mother he had till now spoken of his inward life and feeling to no one; and even with her the intercourse was one of sympathy more than of conversation. A common understanding seemed to spring up between them without words.

For a year he pursued his studies with a stubborn persistence. The elements of language, and the grown forms of learning, furnished wearisome and prosaic tasks. But gradually he began to learn the pleasure of intellectual victories. His pride, which at times had almost fiercely repelled discouragement, began to experience satisfaction in the consciousness of power.

Although Barton had maintained that intimacy with Dr. Wentworth's family in which he had been reared, it was not until his second year at the academy that his companionship with Rose Wentworth began to include an interchange of thoughts, and reasonings, and even discussions.

Accustomed to her father's society, and familiar from her childhood with his discussions of questions in a spirit far deeper than usually prevails, it is not surprising that Rose, some years younger, was fully Barton's equal, and, perhaps, in many ranges of life his superior. Certainly, in taste, in the discrimination of the subtler forms of nature, and in the depth and variety of the enjoyments which spontaneously sprung up in her soul, she was Barton's superior.

What impression Rose Wentworth produced upon others shall be left for them to say, at their own time, and in their own manner. But it is for us to show the groundwork of her nature, from which all these impressions arose.

Perfect physical health produced an even flow of spirits, and an exhilaration of manner, such as leads lambs to skip, and kittens to frolic; and this, in Rose, prevented any of that little-girl saintship of manner which many are fond of depicting. She was buoyant, joyous, free-moving, and artless. Every side of her mind was developed. Deep and rich in moral feeling, strong and fine in the affections, quick and fruitful in intellect, she had, under home influence, been educated to an outward and inward life of singular fulness and beauty.

In estimating the causes of character, men ascribe much to circumstances, much to training, and much to the fulness and force of one's original endowments. But there are other elements more subtle, but of profound value, in the structure of that most wonderful of all architectures—the character; built up of invisible materials, without sound or force, permanent in its nature, yet in form flexible, and prolific in change. Chief among these are to be reckoned *sympathy between faculties*, *and unity of action.*

Some people's heads are mere lodging houses of faculties; each lodger minds his own business, and meddles as little as possible with others. After a whole life, it cannot be perceived that the social affections have derived the least influence from the moral sentiments by whose side they have lived scores of years. And the reverse, also, is witnessed, when the affections have neither softened nor warmed the moral sentiments, nor seemed to have had any intercourse with them. Many men's passions act without curb or influence from the reason, and are limited and restrained only by their own selfish interests.

This non-intercourse may be the result of education, or of the want of it. But there is an original aptitude in this matter. Congruity and inter-sympathy tend, in some natures, to entire harmony and unity in the mind's life; while, in others, there is a stratification, as it were, of faculty. Nothing acts out of its own plane. Certain elements of mind act in their own class, but never out of it, and the faculties, like disintegrated musicians in a mutinous orchestra, play by single ones, or by twos and threes, but never in solid unity and harmony.

It is thus that some natures squander life-force in intermittent efforts. Their endowments are ample, yet they are frittered away uselessly. But where the happy temperament unites in an original and spontaneous harmony all the parts of one's nature, the augmentation of force is but a small part of the good fortune. There is a breadth, a variety, a depth, a fertility of experience, which yields to single lives more of joy than is possessed by scores of ordinary men.

Education is popularly supposed to be the unfolding of mental forces. Far more important, in education, is the inspiration of facile intercourse between all parts of the mind, the opening up of free trade and active commerce between all its faculties.

Rose was gifted, to the last degree, in her constitutional endowments. Every part of her nature was in sympathetic relation to every other part. There were no repulsions or discrepancies between her mental powers. They were in exquisite sympathy; they were in singular symmetry; they were in perfect harmony.

Barton had a strong and large nature, but not reconciled within itself. There were great conflicts yet to be endured; the more painful because unintelligible. They might have wrecked his peace, had it not been for help coming from outside of himself. But that help did not come till late, and then was followed soon by other experiences, by the exaltation, heat and fusion of a great struggle.

The transition from girlhood to womanhood is marked by the development of sentiment rather than by conflicts of passion. That balance and harmony of nature, with which Rose was endowed, had its fortunate parallel in her external condition. Every circumstance about her conspired to give to her mind a natural development. A mother's love, strong and rich, was seasoned with a genial religious element, which gave to it the color of something more than an earthly affection. Agate Bissell furnished the sterner elements, the sense of conscience in daily duties, and she clothed the qualities of regularity, method, and exactitude with a semi-moral nature. Her father's nature tended to enlarge the sphere of her understanding. and of her spiritual nature. She was borne upon his nature, as a soft, white cloud is borne up and wafted by the whole atmosphere. The cloud fades out and reappears, is absorbed and comes again, is white, or crimson, or golden, according to the pulses of color which beat in the air. Yet Rose, though by charming sympathy thus easily melted into her father's moods, never lost her own individuality, but had a spring and force of selfness which held her to the centre of her own proper and distinct nature.

Her father's influence had given a full development to that all sided sympathy, both with society and with nature, which never exists without forming a rich and deep life. The result in Rose was that she derived enjoyment from every side without effort, and almost without consciousness. She sat happily while the shrewish wrens sang, and listened to Agate, to Mother Taft, to Mrs. Polly Marble. She sat under the trees in the edges of the forest, where the shy wood-thrush sang, and with her father talked of questions as unlike familiar life as is that bird's song unlike the sound of familiar field notes. She looked up to Dr. Buell with affectionate awe. His moral philosophy seemed no more discrepant with her father's, because it was different, than one species of flower or tree seemed at variance with others, from which they only differed. But love is the acting force of a woman's life, and love is the organizing centre. In some this element is mild, easily susceptible, and as strong at the very first as ever afterward. In others it lies deep, inaccessible, capable of transcendent power; but, unreached by ordinary influences, it goes sometimes all through life undeveloped, reserved for a better life.

Rose was regarded as of an affectionate nature; but, in reality, the wealth of her nature lay far below the influence of daily life, and unreached. Great as therefore were the expectations which her nature excited in those fitted to appreciate her gifts, there was a power beneath, should it ever develop, that would surprise even an ardent expectation.

CHAPTER XXII.

TWILIGHT DAWN.

The time had come for Barton Cathcart to enter college. He had finished his preparatory studies in a manner peculiarly like himself. His application, without any external flurry or pretence, had been intense. To a real intellectual appetite he added a pride which intensified his endeavors. A difficulty in his studies seemed to him almost like a personal insult. It roused inwardly a fire that could be laid only by victory over it. He put his life against every obstacle. His form had attained its full proportions. He was tall, athletic, nimble as a deer, strong and enduring. Though intense application took something of color from his cheek, the necessity of much out-door exercise had maintained his essential vigor. No one in his class ranked him in any study. No one in the village approached him on the ball ground, or in races. His sedate kindness, his honorable spirit, joined to his scholastic ability, made him the pride of the young men, and the whole town hoped, when young Cathcart entered Amherst College, that he might "take the Valedictory."

It was mid-summer. He had been to Amherst for examination and matriculation, and was now at home, awaiting the opening term. The atmosphere on the day of whose evening we shall speak had been very pure, the sky of a deep and even solemn blue. A peculiar quality of air gave to all objects the utmost clarity. These days are formed by distant storms. Somewhere there had been thunder and mighty rains, but so far away that no other sign of it was perceived but this rare and opaline day. There was in the atmosphere a sadness and tenderness that seemed born of storms overcome. At least so Rachel felt, and so Barton thought, as the sun went down below a horizon without a line or hand's width of cloud—and the moon shone from the opposite quarter.

The day's work was done. That charm of tender melancholy which comes so often with twilight had stolen over mother and son, as they sat in the door, enjoying this silent communion the more because so near the last of such scenes. Rachel remembered how he looked when as a babe he first lay in her arms, as if it were but yesterday. There he sat, a young man! She remembered the eras of his boyhood; single scenes of joy and trouble stood out as if undimmed by days and distance. Her heart swelled with pride and love as she looked upon her son's face, that never looked nobler to her than in this flush of rosy twilight upon the growing moonlight. One whole period of life was closed, sealed, and put away. At her very feet opened another path, along which his manhood was to develop. Her heart prophesied success. He would return to her one day, so wise, and strong, and good, that she should look up to him, and lean her declining strength upon his.

Alice sat in the parlor, where no lamp was burning, playing melancholy Scotch airs, and singing ballads in a low and soft voice. Out in the wheat-field came a whippoorwill, and sat upon a flat rock there, which was yet warm with the day's heat. So near was it that the shrill wail was painful. Barton drove it away. His mother half shuddered. She was not superstitious, but yet to drive away a singing bird was almost like driving away joy from her own door. It was but a flitting thought. The bird flew, and in a field more remote tuned again its softer, sadder note.

"In a few days, Barton, you will go. The place will miss you. You have been a good son, and faithful at work. The blessing pronounced upon obedient children will surely rest upon you."

"Mother, I shall not be far away. It will not seem like a journey or a voyage."

"Ah, my son, in separations, though great distances may be more, short ones are never less painful. Absence is the main thing. Every child that goes away leaves one channel less for the heart to flow through, and throws our thoughts back into ourselves."

"I have a strange feeling, mother. I am glad and sorry both. But now that I am to go, I am impatient to be gone and to be at my work."

"It is best. Your father's blessing and your mother's heart go with you."

They sat near the door, holding each other's hands. The evening scene, the song of the whippoorwill, the approaching separation, a vague shudder, as there arose for a flitting moment an impression of the great out-rolling future of life, an undefined and painful thought of Rose, and now his mother's words, wrought in Barton such an intensity of feeling, that, when Rachel laid her hand upon his raven-black hair, he could no longer contain himself, but leaning his head upon his mother's lap, he wept as if the floods were broken loose. Her tears fell with his. Some words more were spoken of mutual love and need, but they are not for us to record. Not to every angel, even, is it given to know the full meaning and sacredness of a mother's and a son's innermost communion, in a love utterly without passion, without color of selfishness, deep as life, and stronger than death.

The next day came Dr. Wentworth, Rose and her mother, to spend the afternoon and evening. Whatever Barton felt, no one could see by his eye or his manner that Rose's presence was more to him than that of a sister-friend.

If Barton was susceptible to the contagion of love, this was a dangerous day! Rose was in great spirits. Her love for Alice had never shown itself before in ways so beautiful. She was in sympathy with every one, and with each upon his own plane. Her words were not forced; they changed as gently as do pictures in a looking-glass, when in quick succession one and another passes before it.

She was more than cordial with Barton. She frankly preferred him, and without a guise or pretence followed him with her eye and foot, just as she would have done her own brother, if he were leaving home in the full expectation of literary honors. Barton, too, felt only pleasure in Rose's company. Could he have said that Rose was to him only like a sister? Yes, he could have *said* it sincerely. But is every sincere saying of course true? Do we know all that we think we do? Are there not, below what we *do* know, great depths of truth not yet made plain to us? In things of the heart our knowledge is as a little child lying in a skiff upon the ocean, seeing only the sides of the petty boat but nothing of the great underlying sea that heaves it!

Rose believed herself to be only Barton's friend and sister—Rose was right when she thought so. Barton thought himself only Rose's friend and brother. Why, then, were there moments of sharp pain?—flashes of love-pride, that seemed for a second to lay bare the secret places of his soul, as a long flash of lightning at night, sharply reveals the whole landscape in unnatural light?

Rose and Barton stood alone, talking, under the great elms that shaded Cathcart's yard.

"I am sorry that you leave us, Barton. Norwood will hardly be natural without you. But you will come home often, and I shall make father drive us over to Amherst; for you know that we are all proud of you, Barton."

Such tribute was peculiarly grateful to pride, and much pride ad Barton; and yet, he waited as if Rose had not yet said what e wanted.

In a low tone, as if meditating, and speaking unconsciously, he said:

"You feel pride, and Alice feels love, for me."

"Alice does not love you any better than I do," said Rose, laying her hand upon Barton's arm in the most frank and familiar manner. "We both of us love you, and every body is proud of you. I wish I felt as sure of my own brothers as I do of you. You will be good and noble, and I think that is being great."

Her words did not confer pleasure; something was wanting.

Just then came that same whippoorwill and lit upon the flat stone in the wheat-field, and began his love song, so loud and so near, that besides the clear whistle which alone is heard at a distance, all the undertone of throat music—the sucking of the breath, and a reedy tenor tone—were distinctly audible. Rose stood like one at first surprised, but whose thoughts were being carried away, afar and afar off! Barton's whole soul thrilled. Was it a *bird*, or a bird-enclosed spirit that came to him last night with his mother, and that came again to-night with Rose? Was there some omen in this coupling with its wild, melancholy song his mother and Rose, as of the two most intimately concerned in his destiny? The song was becoming painful. The stridor of its notes wrought too keenly on his nerves. And when the night-singer ceased, flew away, and began again at a distance he felt a grateful sense of relief.

"Rose, that bird has a strange effect upon me. It came las night and sang. It seemed unearthly. What does it seem to you?"

"It affects me painfully too. It seems to stir the imaginatior toward the spirit world. It makes familiar things seem strange Somehow I feel bewildered, as if I was neither in the body nor out Barton, do you ever feel both happy and unhappy at the same time? Do you ever feel as if you were alone in the world? as if your thoughts took you into regions where no one could go with you, and revealed to you things which you could not utter? I often feel so. That bird has started me off to-night. I wish that I were a penetrating spirit, free from the body, and could go everywhere, and find out all things, and move freely as the air does, and as widely as the light! I feel as if something were always hovering near that I never catch. When I look on flowers it seems to me I see every thing but just that secret something which makes them what they are! And when I hear some kinds of music, I listen again, certain that under all the sound other sounds more exquisite are surely coming; but they do not come. When I sit in the pine woods, voices almost make themselves plain, and I am just going to hear some mystic message; but—it never comes. I believe it is because I am a woman. If I were a man, and could lay hold on the world, and have a business of my own, I am sure I should feel differently, I could find out things; couldn't I, Barton? I am very happy, but I always seem to be waiting for something."

Poor child! There is an army of waiters in this world. The tears were running down her cheeks, and yet Rose was laughing and looking up to Barton with the most artless simplicity, as if he, like her own father, had the power of solving her problems or changing her moods.

Barton thought he had never before looked upon any thing so beautiful! He never had.

The moonlight fell through the openings of the elm upon her face. The slightest breath of wind moving the pliant boughs shifted the light, which now left her head, then streamed back upon it; now again left it in twilight, and then suddenly glowed upon it with dazzling beauty.

Barton seemed inspired with a new spirit. He could never say again that he felt only a brother's love. His hour had come, and every thought and feeling of his nature rose up to tell him that, o. all human kind, Rose Wentworth was best beloved! He could never call her sister again. The intensity of his feeling showed everything in a white light. In the exaltation of this sudden transport he learned that the mind may carry on many processes at once. He did not for a moment deceive himself in supposing that Rose had for him any such emotions as now filled his heart. Not for a moment did he purpose to secure her deeper interest in him by the pleadings of his own feelings. Rose stood before him as something holy, to be won, not by surprise or importunity, but by the free movements of her own nature, or not at all.

"Can I ever be that which shall draw her to me of her own choice? Till then, for my own sake, and for her sake, I will not speak."

"Barton," said Rose, with the most bewitching simplicity, "what are you thinking of? I know that I should love to hear what you are thinking. Do tell me?"

"Oh, Rose!——"

His voice was strained and unnatural. It was like a cry of pain. Rose trembled and drew near a step, and looked upon him almost as if she feared to see some revelation. But in an instant Barton, with an inward effort, said in a more natural tone:

"Rose, great things have been shown me to-night. Whether I tell you or not, I leave with God, as I leave myself, and my mother, and Alice, and you, Rose, with God! Come, it is dangerous for us to remain here, the air grows damp—let us go in!"

Dimly and painfully Rose began to perceive the change in Barton and its meaning. The thought that arose in her mind was quick, clear, brief, and then it sank down, down, down below all other thoughts, below all common feelings;—down below her communings with her father,—below her very yearnings;—down where the soul's germs are formed,—as far down as the bottom of the sea, where pearls lie undisturbed by storms, is from the top,—there fell her secret thought, and there it rested.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A CONFESSION.

It was plain to young Cathcart from that hour that his life had found the point on which it would turn. Had he never before suspected the secret? In all his years of familiar intercourse had he never plainly raised the question of the precise nature of his feelings towards Rose? Had there never been moods or happy moments of meeting or of parting at which the secret bore witness of the true state of things?

Many men are timid of others, and shy of revealing their secret thoughts to another. But there is a form of sensibility springing from a manly pride, which works shyness of one's own self. Men refuse to think on the results of thinking. They dimly perceive what is coming and veil it. Natures capable of suffering from subtle influences guide their thoughts with as much care and skill to shield them and spare them, as they do their bodies in walking through a rocky pass, or a forest filled with thorns and briers.

But in young Cathcart's case there was another fact, that his feelings had really not grown to a ripeness for disclosure. Where love is a mere passion, or where it is largely an imaginative sentiment, it is susceptible of sudden development. But when love is a leaven that silently works through the whole economy of mind and soul, and gradually pervades every part of the nature, it cannot be sudden. It cannot even be known, in its incipiency, nor discriminated from common good will, from confidence founded upon respect, from genial sympathy, from mere likeness and unison of feeling. Love is seldom seen in its full and perfect form. For that, it requires a greatness of nature that does not come often; and two natures, both large and various, yet unlike, though not discordant, are still rarer. In ordinary life the affection of love is a mere melody, the music of a single affection. But in its higher form love is many melodies wrought into a harmony It is a point at which every power and faculty of one's nature comes to a Unity, and the whole being becomes symmetrical and harmonious. An experience so simple in its final form, but so complex in all the elements which lead to it, is not the growth of an hour. If in some natures it springs up in youth, it must yet, like summer flowers, have gone through a development from the seed or root to the blossom of the fruit.

Barton Cathcart had not reached the fruit, nor even the blossom. He had found out what was the name of that fragrant vine which was twining around his being. But of its unfolding, and of all the clustered experiences that yet lay undisclosed within it, he knew nothing.

When Rose was going, with her family, to return home, Barton seemed calm and self-possessed outwardly, but within his feelings flowed like fast-rushing waters in moonlight, flashing the soft light from their unquiet surfaces with such abruptness that the moon would hardly know its own light, so wild and disordered did it seem! If, in the going to and fro, he was alone with Rose, he avoided her as if her presence brought pain; but, when they came again among the families, Barton clung to her side and sported and frolicked as if they were brother and sister indeed. It was a double instinct. He would not renew with Rose that perilous conversation, and he would not disclose by any change of manner to others that there was in his heart any other feeling toward Rose than that which had always existed between the members of their warmly-attached families.

And so had begun, in pain and struggle, that experience whose real and final nature it is to bring peace. And, in some natures, Love is born of Peace, nourished in tranquillity, and from the first brings forth joy and peace. It knows no struggle, but only gradual development. But in other natures, Love has a controlling work to perform before it may rule in peace. Like a stream born in the mountains, it hides itself among rocks, it is driven over them in foam and fury, it is shut up in dark pools, and steals away through ravines and cliffs, still gathering power but finding no quiet until, far away from its sources, it has fulfilled its course; and then at length, its pure waters, flowing through flower-breeding meadows, rest in deep lakes, where all its agitations are forgotten in deep tranquillity. Not one star that shone upon it all the way down the mountain could it reflect again except in torn and scat tered beams of light. Now every star of heaven is at home in its bosom.

When Rose was gone, Barton felt a joy of relief. He was calm. This is the nature of intense excitement which brings the mind to unity. Barton went to his chamber as if nothing had happened. He calmly wondered in his own mind whether he had been greatly stirred-up during the evening; he looked out of the window upon the yard and the near fields which lay white with moonlight, and he marvelled at his own calmness. What had become of his heart? Where were his feelings?

One cricket, the first that he had heard this summer, was chirping with a shrill *cherk*—a stridulous monotone, which, in certain moods, compares well with our feelings; while, in others, it grates sharply against the nerve. Was there ever storm in such a hemisphere as this? Were ever these tranquil heavens black with rolling clouds? Were these trees that loom up between light and dark, as if they were spirits, ever twisted and strained by groaning winds? Was his own soul that lay within him as if asleep for very peace, sharply torn, whirled with revolution, agitated by fear of disclosure, but an hour ago?

He sat leaning his head upon his palm by the window. A bird in the near tree sang in its sleep, and awaked by its own sweet half-strain, suddenly stopped, and left the air still. Then, afar off he heard a dog barking. That started off another, and a peal of answering dogs rolled through the neighborhood. One by one they dropped off, and let the stillness alone. Two men walked past, talking in low tones. It was stiller than ever when they had gone. A sigh of air moved among the trees. It was as if the night had taken a long breath. The leaves quivered, shook off some drops of dew, and fell asleep again.

There is no such lonesomeness as that which the young feel before they have applied their powers in life, and vindicated their place in society. It is dreariness. That feeling began to steal over Barton. For a moment a sentiment of pity for himself began to rise, but was suppressed by a sharp reaction of pride. The slight conflict aroused him, and he rose to retire to his bed. Behold! his mother stood by his side! So silently had she entered, and so absorbed had been his thoughts, that he had not heard her footstep. How long she had watched him he knew not. There was at first a queer feeling of discovery. It seemed as if his own thoughts and fancies had been walking forth in visible form, and that his mother must have seen them.

But Rachel was a prophet. She did not need outward actions or the sound of words, at least to interpret her children's thoughts. She had inward sight. To Barton's sudden interjection, or interrogatory:

"Mother!"—she made no other answer than to draw him down to his seat. The moon gave light enough to make looks and forms more emphatic than if the light had been clearer. Rachel asked no question, nor made explanation, but spoke as if announcing a result of long conversation in her thoughts.

"Barton! you are in danger of losing your mother."

He started, and looked keenly at her as if to see if signs of sickness were on her cheek.

"I am not going to leave you. But you are leaving me."

"But, mother, how can I go to college and not leave you? I thought you were glad——"

"It is not separation that I fear, but separation of life. A change has come to you. You live in things which you do not speak about. Your life is entering into new paths, where you will need help, and will find none. There is no friend like a mother. Barton, come back to me, and don't leave me!" There was something solemn and inexpressibly tender in his mother's tone and manner. It seemed as if all motherhood lay at the door of his heart, begging to come in!

There is in every royal nature a holy of holies; a shrine within the shrine; a place of silence; the very place of germs, where thought, emotion, and being itself, begin. Into that comes not the most intimate. If any one has seen it, if any foot has trod it, we have banished ourselves and cannot return. There we meet God. There we meet ourselves. There we hide from love itself. But there a mother may come! And the soul is yet its own, though mother and God have looked upon its secrets!

Barton would have spoken, but his mother stopped him by laying her hand upon his head; and looking full upon his face with an ineffable tenderness, she said:

"Barton, tell me nothing! Only say that whenever there shall be a great fear, or—or other feeling, when you need to speak whether it be of good or evil, of victory or trouble, that you will surely come to the place where you were born; where your head lay in infancy, where you have lived and loved freely until now! I do not need to know your thoughts, nor your purposes. But you may need to tell them. You need your mother. Promise me, that whenever your heart must disburden itself you will come back to me"

Inexpressibly affected by a manner not usual to his mother, a certain loftiness of authority, and an exquisite tenderness, Barton, like a brook pent up and at length breaking through, poured out his whole heart to his mother, so freely, so fully, so easily that it seemed more as if he were thinking it to himself than disclosing it to another.

"And as I stood by her, mother, a light seemed to shine out from her, and something not of myself seemed to come upon me with an assurance that I might speak——"

"I know—I understand it all."

—"And yet, before I could speak, a pain pierced me, a darkness rose inside of me—a horror of fear that I was seeking to sacrifice Rose to my own selfish life—that I had not been called by her—that she stood in one place and I in another, and that we could never change."

"All these things are plain to me, Barton. God has given you, in part, your mother's nature. I have an insight of melancholy; but you have your father's judgment, and will control it. But now things were like to have been born out of due time. You had almost followed the inspiration of your own heart, and not the openings of Providence. Your business is not this. Neither is her time come. You must bury and hide this love, as seeds are hidden till their spring time comes. Oh, my son, it is a sacred thing to love! Be not ashamed. It is for your life. But let it be as a light burning in a secret place. When God ordains he will bring it forth. Shall he command the dayspring from on high for this poor, sinful world, and not ordain your hours and seasons? Beware of seeking more than you earn. With what will you buy her heart? Rose is many in one. Of all that I ever knew of womankind she is alone. She comes slowly to womanhood because she brings with her so much. How have you gained a right to her? Will you not, like the patriarch, serve your term of years? Will you not by study and true piety, bring to her by and by a nature that shall command, not supplicate?"

The candle had burned low. It flamed up and threw an unwonted light upon the chamber. It sunk again and went out Neither its presence nor its absence was noticed.

But after midnight a deep sleep was burying Barton's early troubles deeper than the bottom of the sea.

His mother saw the morning star arise. She had come forth before it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FAREWELLS

THE earlier stages of cerebral excitement quicken the external senses. Objects become more clear, sounds more significant, and according to the nature of our own feelings, the exterior world is sad or gay. But a higher degree of excitement works toward reason and sentiment, and the mind is absorbed in its own creations. Nature grows dim, and passing events seem like the silent passage of dreams.

For all the next day Barton saw sunlight as if it were moonlight. He was busy in a hundred little things in town and at home, preparatory to his departure. It seemed to him as if he were putting a gulf between himself and his home. It is not alone distance, but the change of relations and of occupations that works a sense of wide separation. It was not a score of miles to Amherst, but it seemed to Barton like putting the Atlantic Ocean between himself and the farm on which he had been reared. The air seemed full of sad farewells. The well whose windlass was so familiar to his hand, the tools with which he had labored, the cattle and their stalls, the old threshing-floor from which his flail had sent mellow sounds through all the neighborhood, particular trees in the orchard, gates and lanes through which he had gone so many hundred times, all of them on the eve of his going away seemed to be parts of his life, and dimly brought back his own history.

The great elm tree by the gate, where he and Rose had stood, was, and forever after would be, like a consecrated temple. Its choir was all day long singing in its tops, and at half hours Barton found himself under it dreaming and wondering, looking like one who had lost something, or found something, he could not exactly tell which.

The old farmer neighbors, who respected 'Biah Cathcart, passing on their errands to and from town, stopped to make inquiries or to express their interest in the young man.

Old Cyrus Mills was driving past, on his way to town, and seeing Barton in the front door, pulled up. His horse was always in favor of stopping.

"Mornin'! So you're goin' to college?"

"Yes, sir."

"When?"

"In a day or two."

"Take stage?"

"No, sir—father's wagon."

The old man was about sixty years old, with small bones and no flesh on them, and for looks, like a weather-stained rye-straw crooked into a sickle or half a hoop.

"My boy said so. Cost a sight o' money, won't it? S'pose you mean to preach, don't you? Most of 'em do, over to Amherst. My boy's talkin' 'bout eddication too. Shouldn't wonder if Nicholas fetched it one of these days."

"Nicholas is a smart fellow," said Barton. "He ought to make a good scholar."

"Middlin'. But not so good, I expect, as his brother would a bin—him that's gone. I've never felt exactly right, that I wouldn't let him go to college. He wanted to go awfully, and worried about it a good deal. Mebbe if I'd let him go he wouldn't a strained himself and got into a decline." A juicier man would evidently have shed a tear, but old Cyrus Mills had not a drop of moisture in his body to spare, and so instead he winked nervously half a dozen times and then shut his eyes tight.

With that he commenced a series of jerks at his horse's mouth, like one ringing a door-bell. Evidently the bell was far down in the animal, for it was only after six or seven pulls, increasing in length and emphasis, that his horse awoke to the consciousness that he was called for, and began to amble along the dusty road.

Barton sat, after dinner, a half hour by the tree, a clump of lilacs hiding him from passers-by. A wagon with two men, going toward town, came to a walk in front of the house, and Barton had the benefit of the men's opinion.

"Old 'Biah Cathcart's got a snug place—owe any thing?"

"Not's I knows. 'Taint like him. Likely got money out tinterest: 'll need it afore his boy gets through college."

"Oh, Barton? Yes; I've heerd. Is he one of 'em?"

"Can't tell what a boy is when he's tied to his mother's apron-strings. Barton 's good fellow enough, but a proud cuss. It takes these proper fellows to raise the devil when they get their liberty He'll cut a figure among the gals!"

"They say he's mighty sweet on——"

The nag struck into a trot, and the last of the sentence was lost. Barton's cheek was scarlet. He felt like springing over the fence, and dealing summary chastisement to such impertinence. That kind of trifling with his name he was not used to, and would not tolerate. Sit down, my young friend! If you undertake to call men's thoughts and tongues to account for idle and gossipping talk, you will be like a swallow that undertakes to clear the evening air of all the summer insects that fly in it.

Toward evening, on his way home from town, Elishe Townsend —familiarly called "Uncle 'Lishe"—stopped for a moment. He drove a big-bellied mare, whose colt gave her a world of trouble —wouldn't keep right in her sight—would lag behind—wouldn't answer when she whinnied—would follow horses that it didn't belong to—wouldn't keep the right road, but raced into by-ways and lanes—would canter off like mad at every little whiffet of a dog that chose to run out after it. The poor mare seemed anxious and nervous, till the naughty boy of a colt cuddled under her very neck; saying, by her manner, as plainly as words could have done.

"Oh, dear, I never shall make any thing out of such a colt as this! It is a dreadful world for colts. Nobody can tell how a mare feels!"

Uncle 'Lishe himself was simple, sensible, good and merry. But, as every thing has its contrasts, so he carried on the seat by his side a little terrier dog, that didn't laugh, was not merry nor fat, but whose muzzle bristled with a pepper-and-salt-colored beard, sticking straight out every way. Shining down among the hairs, were two eyes that looked like two hazel flames. He carried this speck of a dog evidently to punctuate his sentences; for he was the most restless little imp that ever jumped down into the wagon-bottom only for the sake of jumping up again upon the seat. He would start up and put his paws on the back of the seat to see if any body was behind. Perhaps they were before!—h whirled round to see. If Uncle 'Lishe jerked the reins, he would bark. If the old man saluted any one, every hair on his face seemed to open up to let out the exceedingly sharp bark that he felt it his duty to issue. And when his master stopped to talk for a moment, he always laid one hand on "Dove"—that *was* his name!—as if he were a pistol, and liable to do damage unless he kept hold of the lock.

"And so you're goin' to College, Barton?" at which Uncle 'Lishe shook his sides with laughing. "Don't, Dove!—there's a good dog. Well, I allers thought so; told your mother them black eyes wouldn't allers hunt squirrels and wood-chucks." At which quaint conceit he shook again, not boisterously, but as a large jar of jelly shakes, when turned out. Dove gave a dive into the wagon, ran between his master's legs, and, looking out fiercely, he sought to balance his master's levity by the fierceness of his hair and eyes and ears, all of which in their several ways were working with emphasis.

"Wal, folks 'll miss you, Barton. Old farm 'll miss you, guess. Do you s'pose there's room for one o' my boys over there? He's taken to larnin'. His mother thinks we ought to have a minister." Which idea sent trembles of silent laughter all over him, while he looked full at Barton, as if to see whether he really did take in the whole thing that he was saying.

"You mean Robert, I suppose," said Barton, relaxing a little to the mood of the owner of the mare and the dog.

"Yes, you've guessed it. P'rhaps somebody told you? No great secret though. Been to school for a year steady. Payin' bills all time, and he airnin' nothin'. Be still, Dove,—'tain't nothin',—do be still! Raise a boy—expense all the way—larn him how to work—begin to git somethin' out of him—hush, Dove! —then he ups and tells you he wants to go to college. There 'tis! Mother coaxes—what ails you, Dove?—bills agin—all winter—all summer—boy's off—that's the last of him!" Which tragical issue of raising children seemed to Elisha Townsend a perfect comedy.

"Wal, *somebody* must go to college, you know. May as well be our folks as any body else's. Who knows?" And the jelly vibrated again with tremulous mirth. "Mebbe he'll preach, if he gits convarted. Then his mother and I, mebbe, 'll ride over to his parish—see him in the pulpit—folks a lookin' up at him—and he goin' it just like Buell. Won't it pay? Guess 'twill! Anyhow 'll let him try it.

The nearest approach to a line drawn between the common people and an aristocratic class in New England is that which education furnishes. And there is almost a superstitious reverence for a "*college education.*" If a man has been to college, he has a title. He may be of slender abilities, he may not succeed in his business, but at least he has one claim to respect—he has been to college. It is like a title in a decayed family. It saves the pride and ministers pleasure to the vanity, long after it has in every other respect become utterly useless.

We suspect that an examination would show that a majority of the graduates of New England colleges were farmers' and mechanics' sons. Sometimes it is the youngest son. But, not unfrequently, it is the first-born; and, in such cases, the reflex influence upon the family itself is striking. A family that has a son in college stands higher in the neighborhood from that hour. Every child in the family feels the influence. The girls must have more schooling; the other boys catch the ambition. We recall an instance, where out of seven sons but one escaped the college course, and he after preparing for college was stopped by sickness.

Barton, aside from his own striking character, found himself looked upon with respect, on all sides, as a young man of promise—the heir of college honors. Every body looked at him in church. Dr. Buell shook hands with him after service, and asked when he would leave, and hoped to hear the best things of him. His father's old friends manifested their interest in him, in their several ways. The boys who had played ball with him on the green, or who had hunted and fished with him, were a little proud that their Barton was going to college!

Tommy Taft, who was every year more crumpled up with rheumatism—except the wooden leg, in which he declared he never remembered to have had a single twinge of the rheumatics—was particularly triumphant over Barton, and evidently regarded the boy's success as in some manner due to his influence.

"I knew, boy—I allus know'd how 'twould be. You'll be a spanker yet. If they've got any scholars over there that can run faster than you I should like to see 'em, that's all! Lord, what a ball player! Excuse the swearin', Barton. You ain't a church member, you know. I never swear afore members, unless I'm mad, or—or *so so.* I don't believe there's a man over there that can throw and ketch like you; and as for battin', I never see a ball rise so like a bird and sail off through the air as yourn do. Of course you'll take the honors. You pitch quoits to a p'int, and you can wrestle, side-holt, back-hug, arm's-length, any way, I don't care which; and as for a long pull at a race, I guess your breath wouldn't give out sooner than a blacksmith's belluses. Of course you'll be at the head of 'em all—the hull of 'em. I don't b'lieve there's a chap there that can climb as you can, or straddle a horse as well, or hold out as heavy a sledge hammer at arm's length, or throw it half as far, for that matter, as you can!"

Barton could not but smile at Tommy's notions of a student's qualifications. But if old Taft was ignorant of books and college, he was shrewd enough about human nature. He had the art of touching the very marrow of people's thoughts. He would roll up conversation, apparently as a blind, and rattle away, half in humor and half in sheer impudence, with the minister, or the lawyer, or the schoolmaster, with any church member of some pretension, but before he had done he would contrive to get in a word that went to the quick and lanced some secret tendency, or exposed some weakness which good manners usually salves over, but which Tommy Taft delighted to expose. Toward those whom he adopted into his confidence Tommy was not less acute, but he was careful of wounding.

"And so, Barton, I'm to be left alone," he began again—"I and the Wentworths," he said, with a sharp glance at Barton, quickly withdrawn. "Well, we'll take care of one another. I'll look after the doctor, and let you know," said Tommy, lifting his great beetling eyebrows with a comical expression. "The fact is—four years, you say? Well, four years is a good while. Great many changes. Folks grow a good deal, eh? See new faces. So you may as well hurry along. What you goin' to do then? Not preach, are ye? Should hate to see you stiffen up so, Barton. Good thing—very good thing, when a man's made for it, solid and sober. But it's hard makin' a man-o'-war out of a clipper ship. But I'm no wise consarned. It'll all steer along right. Of course, it may be necessary. I've noticed that a smart young minister is apt to have his pick and choice for marryin'. I'd advise you to go to Congress, Barton, or be Governor, or somethin'. But then, if it's necessary for all your purposes to preach, I hain't no objection."

And with the last sentence he gave Barton another sharp look that, in spite of himself, brought a little color into his cheek.

Dr. Wentworth, to whom Barton was much endeared, went aside from his usual habit, and gave him some advice.

"Barton, I am sure of your courses. I shall lose faith in human nature if you do not hold an honorable career. You are more likely to break down in health. You are too fierce in pursuit, desperate in tenacity; and you have about knowledge the same avariciousness which one sees in men in matters of money—an insatiable greed of more, to which money is only like fuel to fire. Remember, that much of knowledge is growth, not accumulation. The life that one is living in is the book that men more need to know than any other. Never outrun health. A broken-down scholar is like a razor without a handle. The finest edge on the best steel is beholden to the services of homely horn for ability to be useful. Keep an account with your brain. Sleep, food, air, and exercise, are your best friends. Don't cheat them, or cut their company. Don't fall into the vulgar idea that the mind is a warehouse and education a process of stuffing it full of goods. Don't think your mind to be a pick-axe, either, with which a student delves like an Irishman digging for ore. If you must have a figure, call it a sensitive plate, on which nature forms pictures. The more fine the surface and sensitive the quality, the truer and better will be the knowledge. Do not study for ideas alone, but train for condition. Get and keep a healthy brain. Keep it fine. Train it to sharp and accurate impressions. Give it lunge and vigor. Make it like a mirror, before nature, or a daguerrean plate! Barton, don't mope. Be a boy as long as you live. Laugh a good deal. Frolic every day. Keep up high spirits. A low tone of mind is unhealthy. There's food and medicine in nerve. Quantity and quality of nerve mark the distinctions between animals and between men, from the bottom of creation to the top. Now Barton, if you come home with your cheeks sunken, and your eyes staring out of a hollow pit, I will disown you. Good-bye, my dear fellow. God bless you," said the doctor, at the same time taking Barton' hand in both of his, and giving him a cordial adieu, which Barton felt with grateful warmth at his heart for weeks after.

Rose was never more friendly, never more open and sister-like, than when Barton came to say farewell. It was a matter of much anxiety with him. He was not altogether sure whether he had kept his secret from Rose at her visit to his father's house. He thought—he hoped that he had. Rose was so honest and frank that if she had read his heart she surely would in some way have manifested it. If she should be sensitive and uneasy, then he should infer that she had learned the secret of his heart. If she should be restrained and formal, that would indicate an effort to hide her knowledge. If she were excessively gay, and whirled along in conversation with unusual profusion, he should augur ill of that sign.

But Rose gave him no occasion for anxiety. She saw him at the front gate, and ran out to meet him, as she had always done, throwing back from her face the clustering golden brown curls, and looking into his face at once with frankness and sympathy. Nor did she leave him to begin the conversation.

"Come, Sir Collegian, you have saved your reputation. I've been thinking about you all day. The first thing when I waked this morning I said to myself, 'I wonder if that ridiculous Barton will think that our visit the other night was good-bye enough? If he does not come and spend a whole evening here he shall not be forgiven.' "

"And pray, my blooming Rose, what was the penalty that my college sense has so happily enabled me to escape?"

"Oh, Sir Book! I had conjured every influence in nature. I had commanded the birds not to sing to you, the fish not to mind your hook, and all the flowers to flout you. When you would pull a honeysuckle then a bee should have stung you, and when you wanted a rose then a thorn should have pierced you. But all these dire things are happily avoided. Why didn't you bring Alice with you? She is your very blossom, Barton! Aaron's rod without a blossom was but a stick. But with its blossom it was a rod of power and beauty both."

"Really, my complimentary friend, you must be content to-night with only me, for Alice is doing the last things before the eventful to-morrow, when her knight and champion departs, and she shall sit solitary, an Alice without a Barton! I am sure a blossom without a stem is as badly off as a stick without a blossom! You would think that I was a prince if you saw how daintily I am treated at home! Only father keeps to his old way. He goes on just as regular as ever; treats me as if I were twelve years old; gives me sound sentences and good judgments; holds me up sharply to every thing I say, and asks my reasons. A good professor was lost when our farm got a good farmer, I'm thinking."

Rose was already an accomplished musician, and it had always been Barton's delight to listen to her rendering of music, especially Beethoven's. There are in this incomparable master, the Shakespeare of music, those elements which are sure to win all who have a genuine love of nature. As there is hardly a scene in human life for which you shall not find some fit passage in Shakespeare, so there is scarcely a scene or sound in nature for which you may not select a strain in Beethoven which suggests or interprets it.

Rose played Barton's favorite pieces, and ended with the sweetest and noblest of them all—a portion of Beethoven's fifth symphony, of which, without exaggeration, it may be said, were all other music destroyed, the germs of all might be found in that, and the kingdom of sound be re-created.

Then they recalled the many scenes of their childhood; they discoursed in merry mood of the future. Rose was within a year to be gone from home, for one or two years at school. Then, if the Doctor could arrange his business, he proposed to travel with Rose and her mother in Europe, though this might prove a mere day-dream; and by the time that Barton should have completed his college course, Rose would return, a woman full of accomplishments, and wise with a world of foreign sights.

When Barton had said good-bye and turned his steps homeward, he was sure of two things, the one, that Rose was unconscious of his heart's secret; and the other, that Rose was the star of his life. And, alas! he bitterly felt that she was lifted up so far above him,—was so noble and rich in nature,—so sure to command those far more worthy of her love than he could ever expect to be, that one might almost as well follow a star in hopes of clasping it, as follow Rose through the coming years in expectation of winning her!

"What then?" said Barton to himself. "It is Rose or no one! Should God please, I shall have a completed life. Should He otherwise ordain, I shall not be the first man who limped through life striving to do his duty. I will be true to my duty whatever comes. I will be a man, and accomplish something,—so help me God!"

After Barton had left, Rose repaired to her room. She sat in her window looking upon the checkered ground, where the leaves and the moonlight played at lights and shadows with the daintiest dalliance. Rose was not a sentimental girl, in the ordinary meaning of that phrase. She was not accustomed to weave fancy scenes around her own self and form a centre to imaginary pictures. Her life was so full and active, her whole nature was so rounded and healthy that she found satisfaction in the active use of her faculties day by day.

While ideality gave to every one of her faculties the quality of aspiration, this tendency was never followed by discontent. Her ideal life was not an escape from an uncomfortable reality. Her real life was full and joyous, and ideality was employed only to deepen and refine it.

Young, ardent, enthusiastic, sensitive, and sympathetic, it may seem impossible that she should distinctly know that Barton had passed beyond the period of simple friendship without experiencing a profound impression from it.

Yet so it was. She felt for Barton an undisguised affection. She never remembered the time when she did not. She believed that he was firmly attached to her.

It would be difficult to analyze the impression made by the revelation of the night of the Elm Tree. A gentle wonder possessed her, a solemn curiosity to know what his feeling was. She had not been wont to dream of love, nor to think of it, in its romantic unfoldings. Every day she revelled in the joys and duties of that day. Her heart slumbered—slumbered without dreams. Nothing had yet overshadowed her spirit and spoken from above, in tones which rouse the sleeping soul like a resurrection trumpet. Her time had not come. And so, though she loved Barton, it was not with that commanding love which fuses all the feelings, harmonizes all the faculties, and brings the whole soul under the dominion of one supreme emotion.

CHAPTER XXV

FRANK ESEL.

LIKE the sea, which never seems fuller by any amount of rain, nor emptier by any continuance of drought, so a city seems always full, even in summer, and only full in winter. The people whom you know may be gone; and the city may seem socially empty and void, but never numerically. The crowd is always there, surging along the streets, coming and going with endless industries. And, yet, if one follows the great line of summer travel he will think that the great cities must have emptied their contents into cars, steamboats, sea-side hotels, mountain-houses, inland mammoth caravansaries at fashionable springs, and even into the very wilderness.

In general this migrating column is guided by one of two instincts. The one part is seeking a crowd, and the other part is seeking to get rid of a crowd. The first seem to have the majority. But it is only in appearance. At a few places, and in great numbers, they attract attention, while the far greater number, dispersed over wide territories, hidden in farm-houses, or secluded country towns, or re-visiting homes, are not easily estimated.

Commend me to their example who seek out places where daily papers are unknown; where the mail comes but twice a week; where it is so still every day that people have to make a noise on Sunday to distinguish it from week-days; where, if a wagon drives through the town, people come to the door and wonder what has happened.

Commend me to the wisdom of those notable and excellent people who cool the fever of city life under the great elms that spread their patriarchal arms about solitary farm-houses; who exchange the street for mountain streams, make bargains with the brooks, and cast their cheats for trout rather than for men!

Yea, let me abide with the artist in fine scenery, or stroll with some learned professor, who shall put uncouth names on familiar flowers, and let me know what bug it was that bit me, and what bird sung to me. But, above all, let me have the best of all company for a thoughtful man—good health within and solitude without. Yet solitude is apt to become exceedingly solitary and lonesome, therefore it should not be long continued. Let rare and ripe friends dwell within reach; for it is solitude that gives zest to society, and goodly company it is that prepares you for the joys of solitude. Alone-ness is to social life what rests are in music. Sounds following silence are always sweetest.

The other day I got me to a solitary corner, where pine-trees, maples and spruces had leagued against the sun, and quite expelled him. There, upon a root swelling out above the ground, I sat me down, and, leaning against the trunk, I determined to spy out what things are done in such places. So still was I that insects thought me a tree, and made a highway of my limbs. A robin, whose near nest showed young heads, for a time nervously hopped from branch to branch near me, shrilly questioning my errand. But my placid silence soon smoothed down the feathers on its black head and won its confidence. Then all birds chattered in those short notes which are employed for domestic purposes, and are no more to be confounded with their songs than are men's anthems to be deemed their common conversation. Birds both talk and sing. Nearly an hour I waited, and then came what I waited for—a wood-thrush—and perched his speckled breast right over against me in a near tree. He did not look in one place more than another, and so I knew that he believed himself alone.

At once he began dressing his feathers. He ran his bill down through his ash-speckled breast, he probed the wings, and combed out the long coverts. He ruffled up his whole plumage and shook it robustly. Then, his solitary toilet completed, he flew into a tree nearer the road, where he could look out, but not be seen, and began his song. It was neither warble nor continuous song, but a dainty phrasing, in single syllables, of such sweet and loving thoughts as solitude doth breed in pure and tender natures. And all this have I rehearsed, that I might say that none in life sing so sweetly as they who, like the wood-thrush, sit on the twilight edge of solitude and sing to the men who pass by in the sunlight outside.

It was this union of seclusion and publicity that made Norwood a place of favorite resort, through the summer, of artists, of languid scholars and of persons of quiet tastes. There was company for all that shunned solitude, and solitude for all that were weary of company. Each house was secluded from its neighbor. Yards and gardens full of trees and shrubbery, the streets lined with venerable trees, gave the town at a little distance the appearance of having been built in an orchard or a forest-park. A few steps and you could be alone—a few steps too would bring you among crowds. Where else could one watch the gentle conflict between sounds and silence with such dreamy joy?—or make idleness seem so nearly like meditation?—or more nimbly chase the dreams of night with even brighter day-dreams, wondering every day what has become of the day before, and each week where the week has gone, and in autumn what has become of the summer, that trod so noiselessly that none knew how swift were its footsteps! The town filled by July, and was not empty again till late October.

There are but two perfect months in our year—June and October. People from the city usually arrange to miss both. June is the month of gorgeous greens; October, the month of all colors. June has the full beauty of youth; October has the splendor of ripeness. Both of them are out-of-door months. If the year has any thing to tell you, listen now! If these months teach the heart nothing, one may well shut up the book of the year.

Three years had Barton Cathcart been gone, and had ceased to be missed. Neither the sea nor society will keep open its gaps. Waters and men fill every opening. His vacations, year by year, returned him to his friends the same, to the town more and more another man. The brain gives expression to the body. Barton's face had become more thoughtful. His features were more definite. Rose had been gone for the most part during the three years.

Norwood had never been more cheering than during this third year of Barton's absence. It was overflowing with visitors. They were nested in farm-houses, in boarding-houses, in hotels. Some came for a few days—lounged, fished, and departed. Some came for the season. Children were as plenty as flowers. Picnics were in vogue. Rides and excursions occupied much time. The sober Yankee people looked with a doubting eye upon the waste of so much precious time. But, as the money spent went into their hands, they every year grew more inclined to accept the swarm of idlers as a Providential gift.

This year came Frank Esel, a young artist. One of his Boston cronies described him thus: "Frank is a pint of brown-stout, with a rich, creamy foam on it; if you will blow off the foam, you will find some drink." This figure must not prejudice Frank Esel's temperance reputation. He was not a *bon vivant*, and his only intoxication was that of his own excessive good spirits. Of a florid complexion, befitting a sanguine temperament, with brown hair which curled all over his head, blue eyes which were a perpetual invitation to laugh, Frank was the best company possible. Nothing disturbed him. His good spirits foamed and sparkled over checks and obstacles that annoyed other men, as a merry brook turns every impediment into an occasion of bubble and music. His resource of health and hilarity seemed inexhaustible. He was, without a particle of coquetry, a dazzling ladies' man; and, what is more remarkable, Frank, a universal favorite, received with marked partiality and encouraged by generous favor, was not spoiled nor corrupted into puppy conceit. He retained his honest-heartedness and all his disinterestedness and frolic with as little harm from admiration as if he had been a bed of flowers, and did not understand the admiration lavished on him. He played passably well upon the piano, and could sing a serenading song to the guitar that, if the night was bewitching and the listeners romantic, was accounted very well done.

If one looks out upon New-York harbor, after an eastern storm, he will see it covered with craft, that brood upon its surface in flocks like wild fowl; nor can the eye, at a distance, tell why they hold their places, swinging out a little way with the changing tide, facing the wind obstinately and refusing to be blown away. Every one is rooted. The anchor is its root.

If men are found in life much tempted and yet firm in principle, there is an anchor somewhere. It may be a sweetheart, or a sister, or a mother, or a wife, or a father, or some old stanch teacher. Men anchor each other. Frank's anchor was his mother. She was his ideal of all excellence, the sea into which his heart emptied. On the way toward her, his heart, like a copious river, might cherish islands, or branch and shoot out into bayous; these were but delays of that stream which set steadily forward to his mother. She was not only his most intimate companion, but he seemed to gather up in his heart all those affections which are usually distributed under the several heads of son, lover, husband. His father had been dead for several years. He was her only child. The first word on entering home was Frank's call, "Mother!" and, like a bird to its mate's call, a gentle rustling, as of a bird flying through leaves, answered. His face was a glow of fond admiration. He praised her, and laughed over her, and flattered her, and danced about her, with an exhilaration of joy that seemed never able to tire itself. His mother was slender, pale, and beautiful. Frank was strong and elastic. He would catch his mother in his arms, and rush with her nimbly, as if she were but a blossoming spray, into the garden, to show her some new beauty. Once, a friend, coming on invitation to tea, and to spend the evening, was surprised at seeing Frank dash through the door with his mother in his arms, chiding him all the way with fond protest and proud acquiescence, and set her down at his feet, blushing and a little dishevelled, with the introduction, "Horatio, this is my mother." She, with native grace, extended her hand to her surprised and amused guest, saying: "Excuse my spoilt child, and pardon me—I must have been very delinquent to have brought up such a turbulent fellow;" looking upon him all the while with eyes beaming with love. It was fortunate that her property abundantly sufficed for the wants of both. He had a world of capacities; a talent for music, a talent for poetry, a talent for painting, a talent for landscape-gardening, and for architecture. But like a flower-bed too thickly planted, his talents seemed to smother each other. None of them could get ahead. One talent he lacked, that of making money. But this was compensated by a rare facility of spending it. To be sure he had no bad habits. His tastes were not expensive. He never threw away money. It only disappeared! It oozed out like wine through a wormy stave, drop by drop. It melted in his palm like a snow crystal, which dissolves while you look at it. It rose and departed as the drops of dew in the morning do from grass and leaf. It evaporated as delicate perfumes do, and left no trace behind.

"What *has* become of my money? I am sure my pockets have been picked! I have not put my hands in my pocket to-day, mother. Somebody must have done it for me!"

"Really, Frank," would answer his mother, in the most genial and humorous manner, "I think you blame yourself needlessly. I must have forgotten to give you any this morning. I am getting old. I see it by the failure of my memory in such matters."

"Mother, how wicked you are! You know that I had twenty-five dollars only yesterday, and that I have had no expenses, and that there is not a penny left, and that I am a bankrupt and a spendthrift, and that it is never safe to give me money."

Sure there never was such gentle quarrelling before! It was an encounter like two butterflies, that go gracefully whirling round each other in the air. On the whole, Frank's mother seemed so proud of her gay and beautiful boy, that one would be inclined to think that, on the whole, she was glad that he could not keep his funds. When before did the son have all the conscience and heap on himself a wealth of blame and chiding? and the parent defend him and palliate the faults, and justify every infirmity?

How many young heirs will pray for such a mother, as soon as they have read this! But then they must be such sons!

It was not money alone that Frank found it difficult to trace. He could as little tell what had become of his time and various labors. Returning home from his studies he would exclaim:

"Really, it does not seem as if I had accomplished a thing this whole week!"

And it is but just to him to say that he was usually right in his judgment.

And yet every body liked Frank. Every body respected him. He was true and sound at heart. He had excellent judgment and fine taste. But that subtle art of continuity and combination was lacking. Bring a case to him, and his counsel would be excellent; but conduct a series of cases from day to day, especially his own, he could not. He studied life much as butterflies study botany—a little here, a little there, daintily, beautifully, superficially. But his pure, fresh, enthusiastic love for his mother was the one exception. That never varied nor changed. That wa the one constant force of his life, and held him grandly in th orbit of virtuous manhood.

Well, artists must go into the country in summer, and Frank was an artist. He painted, and therefore must sketch. His mother could not be persuaded to leave home. She was a flower that would not bear transplanting, and must be left to grow where it sprouted. But him she resolutely sent away. His letters should cheer her in his absence.

"I shall comfort myself in thinking, Frank, how much you are seeing and learning. It will not do for a young fellow to be tied up at home. You must push out into the world some time, and you may as well begin now."

And so it was that he came to Norwood. Some extracts from his letters will give his view of the place and its society.

"One disadvantage of this place I find to be, that it is too generally beautiful. It serves the purpose of pleasure rather than of study. It seems absurd to come all the way to the Connecticut river to study a clump of grass or to draw an elm tree. The scenery of the valley is charming to the eye, but diffuse and impossible of representation by the pencil. However, I am not confining myself to landscape. I am studying figures. I have several studies of cattle which good judges admire. I have also a capital barn-yard scene—hens, ducks, &c. I have found some most comical people, and have taken lively sketches of them, which I know you will like.

"Last week I did my drawing with a pole. I drew fish—out of the brook. This I learned from some New York artists. I begin to understand metropolitan art. A brandy-flask, a fishing-rod and a fast nag are the proper furniture! Study? I begin to have new light upon the joys of summer studies! I divide the artists that *do* study into two classes—those on whom nature works, and those that work on nature. Of the former no doubt there are many, but I have not yet met them. Of the latter we have some precious specimens. There is one big fellow here whom I found sitting before a most charming view, busily at work painting a board fence, with a pig-weed growing by it, and talking about conscience, and painting only 'what he sees.' He has been working a week, and several knot-holes are yet to be painted in his fence. I looked over his sketches last night. He has one toad, a clump of plantain leaves, a pile of wood, and a heap of stones. I asked him why he selected such subjects. He said 'that there could be no true success without humility. An artist must paint what he sees. Nothing in nature is to be despised. He should begin at the bottom and work his way up. It is man's arrogance and egotism that lead him to disdain these lower forms of existence. A conscientious artist, if humble, would not select only the garish things of nature, but stoop to her lowliest creatures.'

"I replied—'Art is not, like science, to investigate and register all natural objects and phenomena. It attempts to work out its end solely by the use of the beautiful, and the artist is to select only such things as are beautiful.' But he would not listen. And so I recommended him to try an ant-hill, next, and if he succeeded to advance to a potato field. I wish I had his patience and self-denial, however. He is very poor, but refuses to paint any thing that will sell, for fear he will sacrifice his art. By and by hunger will drive him to some other work."

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"My dearest mother, I am a hero! All the town says so. It is fearful how I am admired and praised! My head is turned with compliments and my heart is gone entirely! Let me tell you: Day before yesterday I was sauntering along the street, when I heard an outcry. Looking down the road I saw a horse dashing wildly toward me, and a young woman, who had entirely lost control of him, sitting in the buggy. She looked like marble for paleness and for perfect stillness. Every one seemed horror-struck. The horse was coming toward me at a fearful rate. To head him off was impossible. To catch him a desperate undertaking. I did not stop to think. My head was like a globe of light. My whole body was a brain. I made toward the horse in such a way that I could grasp at his bridle from the side as he passed. To do this firmly and without mistake was as necessary for my safety as for the lady's. I hardly can tell how I succeeded in doing it. I only know that every step I took I was more and more determined to succeed—I had no sense of danger. I grasped the reins close by the bit, and was at first swung from my feet. But my weight checked a little his speed, and with a desperate effort I flung my left arm about his neck, and with my right arm I blinded his eyes, hanging with my whole weight upon his head. The horse seemed staggered and bewildered. Some one dashed past me and cried, 'Hold on to him a minute!" I could not see what he did, but learned afterward that a man named Hiram Beers had snatched the woman out of the wagon. The horse began to plunge. I heard voices crying out, 'Let him go—let him go!' My strength began to fail me. But just as I felt like giving way, a black fellow came to my rescue, and soon seemed to subdue the horse in a wonderful manner.

"But a great crowd had gathered about the young woman. Just as I came near she came through the opening people toward me, as beautiful a creature as ever I looked upon—fine full features, golden chestnut hair (you see the artist will stick out). She came straight to me, and said with infinite sweetness and wonderful solemnity—'I thank you, sir, for my life—and my father—' and in uttering that name her heart seemed to give way and she wept like a child.

"Everybody cried. 'Rose, step right in here, and rest you a minute,' cried one. 'Rose, let me help you home,' said another. Everybody knew her but me. Just then came the parish minister, a fine, elderly man, who almost took her up in his arms, and leaning on him, with some little help from me, she reached home. She would not let me go. I was struck with her self-command. Any other girl that I ever saw would have fainted. She seemed solemn, as one just come out of great danger: but neither flurried nor discomposed. Her father is the chief physician in this region, and universally beloved and looked up to. He has a grand head. I should like to paint it, as I saw it, when he came in. There was a hundred years of love, and gladness, and fear, united in that one look. Every line on his face flashed magnificently. Her mother—a fine woman, too—folded the child in her arms, without a word, and both seemed as if rapt in prayer. The doctor took me with both his hands. 'Hiram has told me of your noble courage. I am your debtor for my whole life. Excuse us all now, but I shall see you to-night, and we must know more of you.' I need not say that I was much touched, and scarcely less when Dr. Buell, as I learned his name to be, in the most tender and earnest manner, laid his hands upon my head, and said, with tears in his eyes, 'The blessings of this whole town, young man, are yours! and may the blessing of the Lord forever abide upon you.' If any body thinks that Yankee people have no hearts, I wish he could have gone back with me to the hotel. At every door-yard stood the people—the women with tears in their eyes—and all of them stepped out to thank me, and shake hands. A white-faced man, scholarly-looking, rather precise and genteel—Judge Bacon they called him—stepped out to me, with a good deal of excitement. 'It was very well done of you, young man; a remarkable thing; very remarkable. It will be a credit to your whole life.'

"When I got back to the hotel, Hiram Beers was lecturing about me, and, as soon as he saw me, he stepped up:

"'I want to shake hands with you, young man. I've seen a good deal about hosses in my day, but that was about the darndest thing yet. A hair more or less, and you'd got all you wanted yourself. I giv you up when I saw you puttin' at his head. Says I to myself, there's a curly head gone. But, when you struck him sideways and then quirled your arm over his neck, I saw that you knew what you's about. I never saw any thing cuter. You've done enough for one day, I guess, and you had better go in and git your supper. But when you want a horse to ride, young man, jest call on Hiram Beers.'

"My darling mother, I wish that you were here. I am never happy but I wish for you. And now, I am sure, you would be very happy. I shall write you every day."

CHAPTER XXVI.

ROSE WENTWORTH'S ART SCHOOL.

"NORWOOD, *October* 10, 1857.

"A DISCOVERY, my darling mother!—a discovery! We are related! I don't mean that you and I are. You already have a suspicion of *that*. But Miss Rose and her mother are our relations! But let me tell it in the order of history.

"The next morning after the runaway in which Miss Rose and I figured, I made my call to inquire for her health; and when I left I became very anxious about my own—that is, the health of my heart! The Wentworths live in a grand old mansion, surrounded with grander old trees. I'm going to send you some studies of them. The front yard is ample, and from the gate to the house it is some sixty paces. As I was walking up, looking on one side and the other at the fine flower-border, and up into the tops of the high hanging elms, and half thinking on the proper things to say, Miss Rose herself appeared at the door, and advanced to meet me, with a cordiality as warm as if she had known me as long as you have, and with a fervor of manner which I know not how to describe. I forgot to say that Dr. Wentworth called upon me last night, and spent an hour with me, and learned all about my family connections, so that Miss Rose was spared the awkwardness of inquiring who I was. You used to tell me, mother mine, that boys could not understand how mothers felt. Now, O mother dear! allow me to assure you that mothers cannot imagine how boys feel. For instance, how I felt when a noble woman of perfect self-possession, with a countenance beaming with sympathy, looked me full in the face with an unwavering look of real gratitude! You know I thought myself rather an accomplished ladies' man; but, upon my word, it seemed to me for about five minutes that I was the girl and she the man. She was perfectly self-possessed and I was confused. Her manner was not that of a school-ma'am, either, nor of a strong-minded woman. It was exquisitely gentle. It was what we call *large*, in a picture. I don't know—she seemed to me like a candle, in which her body was only a wick, and her spirit, surrounding it, was like the flame;—or like a flower, which is a centre, surrounded by an atmosphere of fragrance. Do you begin to see, mother? If not her, do you see me?—that I am intoxicated,—an idol-worshipper?—altogether given up and gone in love? Don't be alarmed or jealous. I am, as usual, in a trance of admiration, and when the enthusiasm abates a little, I will let you know what my real state is.

"It seems that Miss Wentworth is a bold and skilful driver of horses—that she had gone on an errand of charity to a near manufacturing neighborhood, and was returning with this young and high-spirited horse. Just as she entered the village a peddler's cart, full of tin ware and all manner of trumpery, had wandered off and taken its bareboned horse along with it. The animal was feeding, without regard to the convenience of the wagon, and working its way more and more up a very steep bank. Just as Rose came past, the upper wheel mounting a stone, the cart came over bodily, and down toward her came the shining stream of cups, pans, strainers, cullenders, graters, and the whole catalogue of Yankee notions. Her horse was thoroughly scared. Neither her voice nor the reins could manage him. And, as is usual with horses, his fright grew with the very speed at which he fled from danger. She laughed heartily, as she told it—'Never was such an onset made upon flesh and blood before! If my horse had not done it for both of us, I do believe that I should have run away myself from such a clatter and the sight of such a motley mess of kitchen utensils!'

"Mrs. Wentworth, you should know, came from Boston, and as we were talking of Cambridge and of you, and your maiden name, she said that she had cousins of the name of Landor, and so we fell to the pursuit of relationship; and at length it turned out that she was your third cousin. I arose and made Miss Rose a low bow, and begged her to accept as a relation her fourth cousin—Frank Esel!

"It seems, too, on further talk, that we have many common acquaintances in and around Boston. She spent three years there, partly at Prof. Agassiz' school and partly in the study of music and art. I am charmingly at home, already, in Norwood. I have really a kind of home, for Dr. and Mrs. Wentworth invited me, with the manner of command, to make myself at home with them. And never was the virtue of obedience more comely in my eyes. Blessings forever on the tin-peddler, on runaway horses, and on the heroines that preside over such occasions!"

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"*October 20th.*

"I am going to school! I have found a real academy of art! Dr. Wentworth knows every thing. He is like the coast of Maine where I sketched last summer—it makes no difference where you come down to the shore, it is deep water at once. You know that I am not *very* conceited, just as little as will do, and yet be an artist. But it is not in human nature not to put on some slight appearance of knowledge; and, wishing to inspire respect in Miss Rose for my abilities, I thought I could surely venture in my own department!

"I don't know how she did it, but in an hour I felt as though I were a born fool. Miss Rose has the kindest heart and the most truthful tongue that I ever met! She is tender of every body's feelings; yet no one can be long with her and not see every thing in clearer light, in higher relations, with a more minute accuracy; and this advancement in one's own perceptions works in him the sense of his own inferiority. When I am alone, Nature seems to me a vast congeries of wonderful things. But when I am with Miss Rose, Nature rises before me in new aspects—it has a unity, a meaning, a fruitfulness of sentiment that I never dreamed of. Does she sharpen my wits? Or is it that she suggests new ideas? I don't know; probably both. She knows every plant that grows in this region in the same easy and natural way that she knows all her neighbors. She can tell me the floral calendar of every month. She knows the structure of plants,—vegetable physiology, of course; but, in her way of conceiving things, plants have a domestic life,—and I find myself, insensibly, under her influence, regarding these groups of plants as having a sort of semi-human life. Miss Rose speaks of the dispositions of various plants and of their private habits very much in the same way that one would of one's neighbors. I believe that she is as familiar with birds, insects, and animals as she is with the vegetable kingdom.

"She made a remark, yesterday, that struck me.

"'What it was worth while for God to create, and what He thinks of importance enough to continue from generation to generation, ought to seem to intelligent persons of sufficient importance for them to study.'

"At another time she said:

"'I hear people call this natural world "God's Book of Nature,"—which means, I suppose, the Bible of Nature; and yet they leave the greatest part of it unread. What would be thought of a Christian who should leave four-fifths of the other book of God unread, unlooked at?'

"I have ridden on horseback twice with Miss Rose and a party of several others; have been at two picnics, one fishing excursion, and at one sailing party—if that can be so called where we rowed all the way and never lifted a sail. She was the life of the party. No one can be dull where she is. She has much humor and an exuberance of spirits, without the slightest turbulence or frivolity. Her lightest words and merriest have depth in them. They are like the wrinkles of wind and flashes of light that run along the surface of deep water; and yet she seems to enjoy in others the utmost gayety and even that frivolity which high spirits are apt to produce. By the way, Miss Rose rode the very horse whose running away brought me to so much happiness. Good courage, that!"

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"*October 21st.*

"Your letter of the 19th is now in my hand. Is it not a real mother's letter? Is it not *my* mother's letter, such as nobody else in the world could write! But, sober mother, I have misled you in my whirling enthusiasm for Miss Wentworth. When will you learn that your boy is an enthusiast—foams first and settles afterwards? The first week after I met the goddess I was like a great stream rushing through a narrow passage, and so, as you may imagine, I was thoroughly tumbled. But I am spread out in the meadows now, and am running very tranquil.

"Why, O loving inquisitor! Rose Wentworth is no more for me than is the Queen of England! I should as soon try to buy the Koh-i-noor, to wear in my bosom. I have not taken leave of my senses. I admire her more than any human being that ever threw light on my path; but love is another thing.

"By the way, I had a comical time, a few nights ago. An odd creature, Tommy Taft by name, was standing at the doctor's yard gate as I came out. He has a striking face, and very singular manner; both jolly and rude, and yet not altogether unpleasing.

"'Good evening, sir. Is Miss Rose at home?'

"'She is,' I replied.

"'Do you know whether she's going to Boston soon?'

"'I do not. I am not apprised of Miss Rose's future intentions.'

"'P'raps the young cap'n's a relative of the family?'

"I was a little vexed with his manner, even more than with his direct questions, which fact he saw before I could speak.

"'Massy on us, how quick young folks take fire now-a-days! Hope an old fellow that's known the family ever since there was a baby in it, can ask a civil question about it. P'raps you don't want questions asked? Well, shouldn't wonder!'

"'Who are you,' said I, peevishly, 'that you stop me here——' My sentence was cut short by the arrival of Dr. Wentworth, who familiarly addressed this queer jumble of wood and flesh. 'Why, Tommy, you're better of your rheumatism? Glad to see you getting about—but you must take care of this night air. Come in. Rose has something for Mother Taft. She was going over presently with it.'

"'That's jest the reason I shan't go in, doctor! And if you think it'll fetch her over, you may tell her that Mother Taft is poorly, and that she can't bring nothin' into that house that'll do her half so much good as her own face. Have ye heerd any thing from Barton Cathcart lately, doctor? How's he gittin' along They tell me he beats the hull class, and is the fust man there. Only one year more, and then he'll be home; and, to tell the truth, Doctor, I'd give more to see him in Norwood once more than all the scrumptious city folks in the land!"

"The doctor laughed, bid Tommy go home, and passed in. 'Who *is* this Cathcart, I wonder?' I said to myself. The next afternoon Miss Rose was sitting in the morning-glory nook, as it is called, or rather she was sitting before it, and working upon a picture of it. She has in her portfolio the sketches of all the favorite points about home,—Honey-suckle Bower; The Green-house in Winter; The Elm Tree; Evergreen Twilight, and a dozen others

For though the doctor's grounds and garden seem, in a general view, much like any other gentleman's highly kept grounds, yet I have learned from Miss Rose that each part has something distinctive in it. The doctor fancies that there are certain analogies between plants and thoughts or sentiments, and his whole ground is arranged upon some basis of mental philosophy, which Miss Rose promises that her father shall unfold to me.

"I am sure I never saw such a collection of Ipomeas and Convolvoluses before, and though this evening they were shut up, all except the *Bona nox*, which opens at evening and closes in the morning, she found enough to do with her pencil upon the leaves and vines. 'In the morning the blossoms, and at evening the foliage,' said she. 'Of all flowers, this is, perhaps, the most remarkable in sentiment—of all that grow in our climate, at any rate.'

"'What sentiment do you suppose a flower to have, Miss Rose?'

"'The sentiment which it naturally inspires in him that looks on it. What do you think of when you look upon a trellis of morning-glories in full blossom?'

"'Why I should think they were glorious!'

"'Is that all? and you an artist?'

"'Why should an artist see any more than any body else that has good eyes?'

"'Then why is he an artist at all? No man has any call to an artist life unless God has enabled him to see in nature what it is not given to common eyes to see.'

"'But a man cannot see what is not to be seen.'

"'That's a blind man's reason for not being a guide to others.'

"'But what do *you* see, Miss Rose, that I do not?'

"'Perhaps nothing. I am not an artist. You are. Many think they are artists because they have facility in copying what they see. But this is as if a man should copy a Spanish poem in beautiful handwriting, without understanding a word of the language, and then call himself a poet!'

"I felt the color come in my face. A man does not like to be held up between the finger and thumb, as if he were a butterfly, not even if the operator is a beautiful girl, and her face full of quiet roguery, and her manner ever so gentle.

"I certainly did not intend rudeness in my reply, though I committed it. It seemed for the moment as if Miss Rose had pointed her remarks to me personally and disparagingly, though a moment's reflection might have satisfied me that, having never seen any thing of mine beyond the merest sketch, she could not have intended a criticism. But, for the instant, I drew back from the subject, and just then my last night's scene with Tommy Taft occurring to me, I inquired somewhat abruptly—'Miss Rose, who is Barton Cathcart?'

"The moment I had said it I felt that it looked like a hidden question designed to surprise her confidence. If it had been, it would have failed of its aim. She certainly looked surprised, but neither angry nor annoyed. I hastened to relate the scene of the night before with Tommy Taft, which amused her not a little. I added:

"'He watched me, very much as a dog hangs round a suspicious character, determined to know what he has come for.'

"Miss Rose was even more amused at Tommy Taft's supposed vigilance. She went on painting; a touch here, a laugh, another touch, another laugh. Then I thought a certain sadness fell upon her face. It was but a transient shadow. She turned to me, frankly, and said:

"'I could wish that you knew Barton Cathcart, and if you will return next summer, you shall, for he will have graduated then, and will be at home, I presume. You could not but like him. He has been my familiar friend from childhood—a brother, almost as much as my own brothers—till he left for college. He has grown much since then, in every way, though I have seen him but a little. He is one of those deep natures that it is worth your while to have for a friend,—a deep well, that never dries.'

"'Is he good looking?'

"'Every body is handsome whom you love and respect. But Barton does not need any such gloss. His figure is fine and his countenance noble.'

"'Does he talk well?'

"'Father says that the best talkers are those who know how to be silent. Barton listens more than he speaks, but when he does speak, one is never tired of hearing him.'

"'Your description is relishful. Pray tell him that I am coming again next summer and on purpose to make his acquaintance.'

"'He is a true husbandman. His friendship does not reap alone. It sows as well. You are always the richer for his company.'

"'I rather dread these "improving" people—these good folks that go round building every body up. I have an aunt Shillingby, one of the kindest hearts alive, but wherever she goes she is bent upon "doing good," and she moralizes and talks, and advises and questions, and incessantly races with her tongue, till I feel as if I had been travelling on a dusty road. I want a brush and towel to get down to my own flesh again.'

"'Expect no lectures from Barton Cathcart. But he has a vital nature, peculiarly stimulating, yet in no wise demonstrative or noisy. The sun is no mechanic because it builds up all the world's growths. The winds are not engineers because they urge ships and mills. A man may stimulate your whole nature without officious or garrulous habits.'

"After a moment's pause Miss Rose turned to me and said:

"'Cousin Frank'—she had never called me so before—'you must excuse my enthusiasm about Barton. We grew up like brother and sister, although very differently situated in life. He came by his noble nature both from his father and his mother. Barton is a world too sensitive for his own good, capable of being a hero, and quite as capable of becoming a fanatic.'

"'A fanatic, Miss Rose? And is a nature that has the fanatical element in it capable of heroism?'

"'He has the heroic element, because he is strong, patient, capable of suffering without complaint, and because on occasion he would give every thing in the world, his life itself, for that which he loved or for whatever he considered just and right. As to fanaticism, father says that it is the fermentation of strong natures, who, not having outlet for their feelings, grow inwardly, until they mistake their own feelings and thoughts for outward realities. I can easily imagine circumstances in which Barton would see the whole world in the color of his own heart.'

"I do not know why I should dislike what Miss Rose said of Cathcart—I do not. Yet, for some reason, I did not take a fancy to him. Perhaps I shall when I see him.

"I returned to the subject of Art:

"'Miss Rose, you were speaking a little while ago of that which gave a man the right to call himself an artist.'

"'I suppose *being* an artist gives the right to the name. My father, you must understand, is my instructor in all my philosophy. My opinions are a pale reflection of his. He divides men of your calling into two classes—decorators and artists; and artists again into those that please and those that teach. The former paint for the senses and not for the soul. They are copyists of nature in her more material aspects. They have no soul behind their eyes. They see only matter, not mind, in nature. An artist ought to see grace, beauty, tenderness, and subtle fancies in nature which common eyes fail to see; and when he reproduces an object it should seem more attractive to common eyes than the original is, because the artist has expressed in color something more than others would have seen. Father says that it is the amount of one's self in a picture that determines whether it is made by an artist or an artisan.'

"'Bravo, bravo! You shall give lectures, to convince ninety-nine in every hundred artists that they have no vocation! With such views as these before my mind, I shall never try my pencil again. What! Frank Esel going about to express in his picture what Nature did not express! Never shall a young gentleman so humble as I am be so presumptuous! I shall burn my brushes!'

"'It may be all well for you to burn your brushes, but not for such reasons. I do not say that Nature does not express all and more than Art will ever represent; but one part of her truth Nature expresses to the senses, and another and far higher, through the senses, she expresses to the soul. It is this second and higher kind of beauty and truth that an artist should bring forth and throw visibly upon his work. But your raillery is fairly deserved. You must excuse my lecture. Now, if it had been my father, Mr. Artist, you would have gathered more ideas.'

"'And less pleasure.'

"'Though he would not have let you off in so short a time.'

"'Its brevity is the only fault of your discourse.'

"'But there come the girls! No, you must not go. We three young ladies have no beau to-night but you, and you must not deny your services. Miss Laura Bacon and Alice Cathcart come with their parents to an informal tea; and, as every well-arranged table is twice set—for the eyes as well as for the palate,—we shall draw upon your skill for help, Sir Artist!'

"I could not but admire the grace of her carriage. You know how much I criticise the careless and slovenly way in which young ladies are permitted to bear themselves. If one had to choose between a fine and graceful carriage of one's person, and beauty of face, I think ladies would consult their interest by choosing the former. Miss Rose is a splendid walker. Her body moves as if it were floated in the air rather than propelled from the ground. Yet you feel that there is an elastic tread and a firm hold upon the ground. I have never seen her move nervously or, indeed, in any haste. She expresses deliberation, but suggests nimbleness.

"We went to the house. The tea-table was already spread. I was sent to collect leaves, with special instructions,—both green leaves and colored ones, oak-leaves, chestnut-leaves, hickory, and liquidamber—the most star-like of all leaves. Of colored leaves—maple, yellow and scarlet, the crimson of the *Nyssa*, and that glowing and brilliant thing—the sumach-leaf.

"While I was gone, came Judge Bacon and his slightly stately wife; 'Biah Cathcart and his dark-eyed wife; Dr. Buell and his feeble wife; old Mr. Edwards and his sister. Every one seemed at home; all went where they pleased, did as they pleased. But artist I was learning of Miss Rose how to adorn a table with materials so common as to be within every one's reach, and which, in the end, were so effective that I am sure I never saw table more charming in my life.

"Green leaves were first pinned together by their own stems into a plat, and then made into circular *mats*—the points of the leaves well-advanced; and upon each one of these green mats rested a pure white china plate. Thus oak-leaves, hickory-leaves, maple and liquidamber alternating, seemed sprouting from beneath every dish. A bowl had been arranged with selected grasses, and the butter-dish set in it in such a manner that the golden butter was fringed with the grasses from which it came. For the honey, which was snow-white and taken from the doctor's own hives, Miss Rose had herself collected white clover-blossoms, and arranged them upon a green base of red-clover leaves, so that the dainty comb seemed to rise up out of the very flowers which had yielded it.

"The large silver waiter which contained the tea-things rested upon a broad ruffle of colored leaves—yellow and scarlet maple-leaves, golden-colored hickory-leaves, deep purplish leaves of the sweet-gum; and they were so arranged that the highest point of color was at each end, and a gradation of color tending all the way back to green, terminated, in the front, in a real summer green tuft of leaves. I was never more struck with the effects which can be produced by a skilful use of mere foliage, without flowers, and I never before felt how coarse are the heaps and stacks of flowers which are piled upon decorated tables in comparison with this delicate and almost flowerless use of leaves. It was inexpensive beauty, requiring but a few moments to prepare it, and tending to connect social enjoyment with natural objects in a manner that is characteristic of this whole household.

"While I was busy with the young ladies,—Miss Rose I have described,—Miss Alice Cathcart, a dark-haired beauty, something shy and silent,—Miss Mary Bacon, a blonde, tall, slender, glittering, but sharp, positive and selfish,—the latter quality, however, carried like a sword, in a scabbard of politeness;—while, I say, I was tearing myself away from the gentlemen and devoting myself disinterestedly to these three young ladies, the gentlemen were sitting under the great elm conversing. That is a wonderful tree. It is the doctor's temple. Probably no tree in the State has heard as much discourse as this one. It was a glorious sunset. The air was calm. The whole atmosphere was suffused with a vaporous golden light. It was a translucent flood, and its waves rolled upward to the very zenith. A strange glow fell upon all the village. Trees and houses seemed glorified, and were transfigured. At its height, so marked had this become, that people were calling to each other to come out and see the sunset. We all went forth. Miss Rose shaded her eyes, and looked with a solemn rapture full at the sun, now tempered in the peculiar atmosphere to a mildness tolerable to the eye. Miss Alice sat as if she were fallen into a trance. Miss Bacon treated nature in an obliging way, as if she felt it proper to recognize the very polite and agreeable manner in which the sun was taking leave.

"I am strangely affected by Miss Rose, as by no other person in the world! I am drawn to her irresistibly. She is good, she is true, she is simple, she is beautiful, and yet this fascination is not love! She sobers me. I do not feel the exhilaration in her presence that I do with others. Life seems deeper; nature more solemn. She has power to stir my soul, even if she does not influence my heart!

"As twilight came on, the gentlemen were summoned to tea. This old mansion seems made for hospitality. The very air in it seems to whisper to every one, Be happy. Except my own darling mother, never was so motherly a woman as Mrs. Wentworth. She is always genial, often gay and sometimes brilliant. But in every mood a serene kindness beams from her face. Mother, the expression of kindness in a rich nature is even more beautiful than any expression of intellect! I have put in my note-book: 'Beauty is of the disposition. Love is the type of perfect beauty.'

"Every one did what pleased him. No one was pursued with teasing politeness. I wish I could repeat the half of what was said during the evening; but it could not be done. But I have jotted down in my note-book many things that an artist should remember and investigate.

"The autumn is growing more gorgeous. Every day is perfect, and yet the next seems better! And every day has a secret joy, to me more dear than all the colors of the trees express, that my pleasant vacation will so soon end in a yet more pleasant coming home! But I can never measure the unexpected benefit of this visit. I am sobered. A new thought of life is born in me. Should I persevere in the pursuit of art, it will be with a better insight of its meanings; and if I abandon it, it will be from despair of reaching what I can perceive to be a true artist's aim. My heart beats quicker to think how soon I shall see you. And yet,—well, good-bye, and scarcely expect to hear from me till you take it from my very lips!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

A TALK ABOUT ENJOYING MONEY

WHILE Frank Esel and the young ladies were pleasantly preparing for tea, there were sitting or lying on the ground, under the great elm, Parson Buell, Judge Bacon, Mr. Edwards, and an eccentric merchant and manufacturer, Mr. Brett by name, whose whole life was pragmatically benevolent, and whose conscience was always flying at him and teasing him for not being more benevolent.

Judge Bacon opened upon Mr. Brett.

"Brett, have you noticed Dr. Wentworth's conservatory? I wonder you do not add one to your house. I am sure you spend too much money on benevolence. You owe a little now and then to selfishness. Why, my dear fellow, you live as if you thought it to be your first duty not to enjoy the wealth which a kind Providence has sent you."

Mr. Brett was a nervous man, and talked all over when he became interested.

"Why, Judge, I should think it was Mrs. Brett talking if I did not see your face. She troubles me day by day. But, really, I am not conscience-free in the matter. I—I—do not dare spend on myself while there is so much to be done with money,—so many poor; so many ignorant; so many tenements to be built and families to be regarded, and factory children to be educated; and, besides, so much to be done for the world abroad."

"Mark the perfect man! Hear him talk! Why, sir, if you send missionaries to South Africa, it is only fair that you should receive the Cape-bulbs in return; if you send Bibles to South America, why not receive orchids in exchange? We have more Bibles than we can use, and they have more plants. A fair and legitimate commerce. Thus, we export missionaries and import roses, and both parties exchange superfluities for objects of value."

"Come, come Judge Bacon," said Parson Buell, with a grave smile, for Brett was looking wofully puzzled at the judge's way of putting duty, "I wish we had more men that were unjust tc selfishness, as you say brother Brett is."

"But, then, Reverend Sir," said Bacon, in a comical, mocking tone, "do you not think that he ought to have a conscience in the matter of making benevolence appear pinching and frugal to unloveliness? One reason why I don't become rich is the fear that I shall live as austerely as brother Brett does. One might just as well be poor, as to be rich and spend all his money in giving it away. Do you really think, Brett, that you would cheat a single heathen out of a fair chance, if you were to put up a green-house, hire a gardener, and live in a little more luxurious way?"

"You have touched the very point," said Brett—"*luxury.* I'm sure that it is my duty to provide my family with the necessaries of life; but luxuries I am not so clear about. I never feel happy when I am persuaded to obtain them. I have my scruples whether a Christian may, in the present state of the world, indulge in luxuries."

"Is that so?" replied the teasing judge, affecting a manner of great concern. "Is that so, my dear Ascetic? You must give me leave to say that I think you, sir, already on the side of self-indulgence. Calf-skin boots, upon my word! A beaver hat! when a felt one would equally well shield your head, at but a quarter the expense! And that glaring violation of economy, a broadcloth coat, instead of linsey-woolsey! Why, sir, I think there must be a year's schooling on your person for some poor vagabond, and yet you are talking about your conscience!"

"For all that," said Mr. Brett, who smiled rather faintly, as if he was not altogether sure but that it might be his duty to retrench his personal expenses,—"for all that, I am in doubt of going any further. Have I a right to put so much money into a green-house, and to be at the annual expense required for a gardener, when down at the factories there is so much to be done among the workmen, for schools, and clothing, and libraries?"

"That's a fair question," said Buell, "and I should like to hear your opinion, gentlemen. I confess that I am puzzled more by the practical application of it than by the principle itself. I I have no doubt of a Christian man's liberty to use his wealth for his own household, but how far, by what rule, to limit it, I do not clearly see."

Judge Bacon, who had the art of being elegant in negligence was lying upon his side on the ground, with his head resting on his left hand, while with the other he was playing nature, as he styled it, to a worm. Laying down a stick in its way, the worm mounted it.

"Now," said he, "here is my man, this stick is natural law if I turn it so, he creeps north; if so, east; if so, south; so that while he thinks that he is creeping in the line of the stick, he is veering to the four points of the compass."

"No matter about your worm, learned judge, solve the minister's practical problem," said Cathcart.

"Oh, gentlemen, that I might be troubled, as Brett is, by wealth that I don't know how to use! Brett, exchange with me! Give me your factories, stores, and sinful bonds and deposits, and do you take my library and penurious clients, and it will refresh you much to solve new questions of finance, with which I am already familiar."

The ex-schoolmaster brought back the question, saying that he thought no matter more important than to furnish some clue by which a Christian man might determine where Rights ended and Duty began, in the use of wealth.

"Not a lawful distinction," said the judge; "all his rights are duties, and all his duties are rights."

"Well, what are both put together? How much may a man use for his own household, and self; now largely may he lay out his estate, and convert it to mere beauty instead of use? How largely may he store his dwelling with art-treasures, and spread a sumptuous table; and yet, say, 'None of us liveth unto himself?'"

Dr. Wentworth, who had listened as if he heard not, now began to stir, as if he were about to emerge from his abstractions.

"My dear Doctor," said the judge, "don't start off with your speech yet. You see, gentlemen, he has been firing up for some time, and there will be no more chance for us if he once begins! What the world of letters lost, Wentworth, when you chose medicine! We have lost a Burke and got only Dr. Wentworth. Let me deal with Brett, whose conscience is like a spider on the window, always spinning webs to keep out the light. I think a man has at least the natural rights of the animal kingdom. If an eagle has a right to all the feathers that can fairly grow on his body, and a sheep to all the wool that can grow on his skin, and a butterfly to all the colors on his wings, and a bird to all the music he can make, a man has a right to what property he honestly accumulates."

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Edwards, "you don't half know your lesson. Eagles shed their feathers, and keep young by moulting. Sheep are sheared for their own comfort and every body's convenience; and birds sing for all the town, as well as for themselves; while the butterfly, that piece of painted uselessness, comes late and goes early, as if Nature had no use for things that did not contribute to others' good. So, Judge, you must go to the foot of your class."

"I am dumb, Mr. Schoolmaster. Now let the doctor speak. I am sure it is not safe for him or us to restrain him longer."

Notwithstanding Judge Bacon's banter, the doctor seemed in no hurry to express his mind, being apparently absorbed with a favorite little dog, whose vivacity and vitality seemed inexhaustible.

"Why should the doctor leave his companion for our poor society?" said Bacon.

"That petty shag of a dog which he amiably teases is not to be left unblessed and solitary! Benevolence will still find ways of conferring happiness! That dog runs like an eight-day clock—does he *ever* need winding-up, Doctor?"

"I think, gentlemen, the matter in hand is far less difficult," said Wentworth, "than it is made to seem."

"The subject that is in *your* hand, doctor?" said the teasing judge.

"No mistake can be greater than for one to speak of his family," said Dr. Wentworth, "as of something separate from the community in which he lives. A family bears to the community the relation which limbs and organs do to the human body. What if a man should have serious scruples whether he should bestow food upon the stomach instead of the whole body! The family is the digesting organ of the body politic. The very way to feed the community is to feed the family. This is the point of contact for each man with the society in which he lives. Through the family, chiefly, we are to act upon society. Money contributed there is contributed to the whole. To be sure, this is not to exclude other benefactions; but, when you have built churches, schools and libraries, established public charities, all of which are very noble and necessary, it remains true that the best gift which one can offer to the state is the living gift of virtuous, intelligent and enterprising children.

"Nothing is more remote from selfishness than generous expenditure in building up a home, and enriching it with all that shall make it beautiful without and lovely within. A man who builds a noble house does it for the whole neighborhood, not for himself alone. He who surrounds his children with books, refines their thoughts by early familiarity with art, is training them for the State. In no other way could he spend so much money so usefully for the State. He that actually rears good citizens presents to the State better properties, far nobler, than ample funds or costly buildings.

"A man may, of course, be selfish in family expenditure, but all such outlay corrupts the family. No expense can be had which really benefits the family, that, through them, does not even more benefit the whole community.

"Why, gentlemen, I settled that question with this elm-tree long ago. I had heard it sighing for some days, and in the night it lay awake creaking and groaning; and so one day, as I sat under it, it stooped one of its long branches near my ear and made me its confidant and confessor. It seems the tree had fallen into a moral difficulty. 'Here am I, with my huge bulk, occupying space that might serve for scores of trees; and, when the sun shines, I take its whole glory on my head, and nothing below can get a fair share, and my roots are drinking out of the ground an enormous supply of food and moisture, and I am under condemnation for this great selfishness of my life.' I comforted the arborescent penitent the best way I could. 'Every thing, my great heart,' said I 'that makes you large and healthy, makes this village happy. Hundreds sit down in your shadow; this house, of which you are a dendral guardian-angel, is blessed in your prosperity; weary laborers stop and rest under you; all the village is proud of your beauty; sick people look at you out of their windows and are comforted. Besides, how many myriads of insects and how many thousands of birds are kept by you, and, in turn, disport themselves for our happiness! It is true that it takes a great deal to keep you but you pay it all back a hundred-fold in use and beauty.'"

"Well done, poet," said Bacon, clapping his hands, in which all joined.

"Jotham could not have mended your parable," said the minister.

Edwards archly remarked that the tree was even more personally useful than one could imagine who had not been a schoolmaster, and needed switches for lazy boys.

"Astonishing what one gets by good company," said Judge Bacon. "I have lived all my life without looking at trees in the light of discipline! And what deception! I have seen Edwards often walking and looking up in a devout way. I attributed it to pious thoughts; but no, he was reflecting on switches. A schoolmaster naturally, then, divides trees into flagellant and non-flagellant trees. Are elm switches the best, Edwards?"

"Slightly too pliant," replied he, with grave humor. "A perfect switch should be stiff in your hand, slender, long, and at the end both elastic and tough. I have never obtained the best results from apple-trees. They are brittle; and it is disappointing to reasonable expectations to have a whip break in your hand. The fault of most trees is that they fail to produce long, slender, and tough branches."

"Pray, what do you consider the schoolmaster's best friend among trees? The hickory?"

"By no means. Only artificial rods are formed from its seasoned timbers. The quince is, above all, the proper shade tree for school-houses. The fruit is acerb, but the wood full of sweetness to those who need it. Indeed, it might be called the boy's austere friend."

"I thought the birch was the tree of trees for schoolmasters. All literature celebrates its virtues. Indeed, its name has been appropriated to the idea of discipline."

"In country school-houses the birch may be accessible, but not in town. Even were it at hand, it must yield to the quince in those searching, subtle virtues which are so wholesome to youths in distress."

"Pray, Dr. Wentworth," said Buell, "go on with your remarks. Your discourse needs an application."

"Whatever expenditure refines the family and lifts it into a larger sphere of living, is really spent upon the whole community as well. If no man lives better than the poorest man, there will be no leader in material things. A community needs examples to excite its ambition. A noble dwelling is, in part, the property of all who dwell near it. Fine grounds not only confer pleasure directly on all who visit or pass by, but they excite every man of any spirit to improve his own grounds. A family of children upon whom wealth has been employed judiciously, if they are at all worthy, represent in the community a higher type of life than can be found in poverty. Fine dress may be looked upon either as a matter of display or of worthy example. In the latter aspect, it is a duty as well as a pleasure. You teach us, Dr. Buell, that every thing which makes the church noble and beautiful is an honor to God. The same principle applies to the domestic household. Every element that adds to the pleasure and refinement of the family puts honor and dignity upon the family state. Whoever makes home seem to the young dearer and more happy, is a public benefactor. Not all dissipated young men, of course, are children brought up in meagre economy. But it is very certain that children whose homes are not interesting to them by affection, or by attractive objects, are more easily tempted into places and company fraught with danger."

"These are weighty views," said Parson Buell; "and though I have never hitherto regarded the subject in this light, nor indeed attempted to practise upon it, I confess that I am struck with your views, and am inclined to believe them correct."

"Dear, dear me!" said Bacon, "must I begin, at my time of life, to adorn and—what is it?—dignify—yes, that was the phrase—'honor and dignity.' Well, I shall at once make out a bill of honeysuckles, roses, roots and bulbs, and other such elements of virtue; for it would ill become me, a judge, to practise the immorality of a frigid house—a barren yard and a flowerless garden?"

"Alas! alas!" said Edwards, with affected sorrow.

"Why, what is the matter?" said Bacon.

"I only sighed for those with whom you next do business! Generosity usually avenges itself on somebody!"

"Has it occurred to you, my dear Doctor," said Buell, "that New England families have been brought up upon a stern pattern, and upon a principle different from that which you advocate? Boys and girls in former times have had very little time or opportunity for the cultivation of taste."

"Since the founding of the Colonies," replied Dr. Wentworth "there have been throughout New England what we called leading and influential families, that possessed wealth, that built fine mansions like this of mine, and lived in some considerable style. That some of these wealthy families have set bad examples, is true; but, as a whole, the class have gone before the times, powerly affected the ideas of the whole community, given them larger notions of family life, and, if it could only be traced, I think you would find that the young man who launched out into the world and became wealthy had received, perhaps unconsciously, powerful influence from their example.

"But, Dr. Buell, it is not necessary that one should be rich. All that I say is, that he who, according to his means, spends his money in beautifying and refining his house, is working for the whole community as much, and sometimes even more, than for his own family, and need not charge himself with selfishness."

"It is certainly not selfish," said Dr. Buell, "to spend money on one's self, if thereby a higher influence is secured for society. It is upon that principle that one is justified in liberal expenditure for education, and even for travel, as an eminent means of liberal education."

"Well, well," said Bacon, "I am getting very tired. Is not tea nearly ready? These views are fearful. They will revolutionize New Engand. What a spending of money! What ravages under the name of taste! Well, I wash my hands of such doctrines! On you, Dr. Buell. and you, Wentworth, and you, gentlemen, if you do not protest, must rest the guilt! Positively shocking! New England farmers spending money for beauty! Whew!"

"I beg your pardon, Judge," said Dr. Wentworth, smiling quietly, "New England has practised on these very views, to a degree probably not equalled in any other part of the globe. I do not believe that so large a proportion of men's revenue was eve spent upon the Family as in New England. The idea of the family of comfort at home, of respectable appearance, of education for all the children, of neatness and some sort of beauty, has nowhere else ever been so high among the whole body of the common people.

This is one reason why the Yankee is stigmatized as stingy. His idea of respectability is expensive. Only sterling industry and stern economy will enable him to carry along so much as enters in New England into the society idea of the family! There may be no difference in the external appearance of economy and parsimony, but their interiors are as different as honor and meanness. The New England people are, beyond all question, the most generous and the most liberal, according to their means, in the world More money can be raised there for any great purpose of public weal than anywhere else. Nor is New England ever tired of giving. Schools in thousands over the West and South, academies in every State where her sons have emigrated, churches, colleges, and all institutions of religion, from end to end of this continent, are the witnesses of what men are pleased to call the narrow spirit of New England."

"Oh, Wentworth," said Judge Bacon, with a polite yawn, "I had no idea of starting you off at such a rate when I cleared my skirts of your heresy. Rather than have you go on at this rate, I will recant—yes, I accept your views. Let me see: spending money on one's self is virtue; on one's family, public benefaction! Indeed, I am already, I perceive, an excellent man. What services I have rendered to society in bringing up that girl of mine! It is a delightful surprise to find that my selfishness has all been virtue! Dr. Buell, do you never exchange?"

"Certainly, often; why do you ask?"

"I thought, perhaps, you might sometimes like to ask Wentworth here to preach. He has, I think, a manner that would eminently become the pulpit."

"But, to return to the starting-point, will you tell me of what practical use is a conservatory?" said Brett.

"A very means of grace," replied Judge Bacon. "It will cost you smartly to build it; yet more to stock it and to keep it up It will never be large enough, for you will be always wanting more things than it can hold; it will be always too large, for you cannot get what things you already have half taken care of. You will fight with red spiders one week and with aphides the next and with the white scale all the time. Your water-pipes will get out of order once a month; your gardener will be out of order every day. He won't let you touch your own things—will always know more than you do, and have a good excuse for *not* having flowers; and, above all, on the coldest night of the year he will get drunk, let the fire down, and freeze up your whole precious stock of tender things. My dear Brett, if you stand in need of patience—if you would cultivate long suffering—if you would grow in grace far faster than your flowers will in health—by all means get a greenhouse. To-day you shall be tormented with fumigations of tobacco; to-morrow you shall be half suffocated with fumes of sulphur, and every now and then, by way of variety, you will be drenched by whale-oil soap-suds!"

All laughed at the comical distress predicted.

"But," said Brett, "I suppose there *are* faithful men and gardeners, and that it is with a greenhouse as with a store or factory—if a man selects poor agents, he must expect shiftless work. If worse comes to worst, I can perhaps coax Jacquin to move his shop up here, and work in my greenhouse."

"Who is Jacquin, Brett? One of your factory-village men?"

"Yes, a shoemaker with a taste for every thing. Every day he has a new invention. He has exhausted the subject of warming and ventilating, and he works them out for his own mere pleasure. Being very fond of flowers, he has built himself a little greenhouse, thirty feet long, and taken off ten feet for his shop; and he has contrived a tea-kettle of a stove, that, while it heats water for circulation through his pet greenhouse, furnishes him heat for the shop. He has got together a very tolerable collection of plants, and any gardener might be proud to have his stock in as high health as his."

"But, gentlemen," said Wentworth, "it would be wrong to let our scoffing judge corrupt your ideas of the comforts of a greenhouse. Let me tell my experience: In the first place, I did not try to make it too large. I rejected all mere curiosities, far-fetched and difficult of treatment, and contented myself with common things that, for reasonable care, would return a generous supply of flowers. I like common flowers best—new flowers are like strangers, that put you upon your good manners every moment; common flowers are like old friends, between whom and you there are a hundred associations and memories of pleasure.

"Then, as to the enjoyment. On a weary winter day, with a storm going on out of doors, and snow blinding the air, and winds howling through the trees, open the door into your conservatory and behold, summer is all around you! Besides, what picture of landscape was ever so charming, as to sit across the room and look through the door upon such green and blossoming vegetation? One hour pays for a year's care. Then, too, a sprig of flowers on the table in February, or March, is a blessing.

"However, I think every man that ever loved flowers knows that the chief delight consists in *giving them away.* Much as I enjoy my garden, I confess I am more delighted with other people's pleasure in it than with my own. And so that it is well given, a flower given away is far more enjoyed than a flower kept. In my profession, I have had much occasion to notice this matter. In long and wearisome sicknesses, no medicine is more beneficial than some innocent exhilaration to the patient's mind. It is the nerve-power that cures after all. Whatever rouses up the brain pleasantly is apt to do the patient good. And I carry about as many flowers, in some places, as I do pills."

"Without doubt," said Bacon, "with equal safety to the patient."

"At any rate, a gentleman will find an argument of benevolence for making a greenhouse, which will fully neutralize any fear of selfishness."

"There goes the tea bell," said the judge, affecting a joyful alacrity, "and here comes the fairest of all messengers. Miss Rose, good evening! You were always an angel of mercy! Do take your father off; and, as we are all faint with listening, I am sure you will never again greet a pilgrim band so glad of a little refreshment!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A NEW LIFE.

Frank Esel returned from his summer wanderings, reveries and conversations with a divided heart. Never had he loved his mother more or hungered more for home. Yet there was a shadow on his brightness. He evidently had much to think of. He was more industrious. Never before had he applied himself with so serious a purpose to his art. His young friends noticed the change.

"Frank, what's come over you?" said his gay, long-haired, much-smoking friend, Lewis Keswick. "You have taken to drudging ever since you came back. You don't seem like yourself."

"But I think I am only just coming to myself."

"How's that? Not going to be religious, eh? None of that sort of thing?"

"Not exactly. In fact, I hardly know what ails me. But it seems as though I had been trifling all my life, and using my art to do it with. Hitherto I have been painting playthings in a life frolic. Now I only know that I am dissatisfied without knowing how to amend."

"Thunder! What's got into you? I should think you had run afoul of a minister, or stumbled into a church-door!"

"I might do worse!"

"Why you're going to preach, I'll bet! Come, out with it! I'll join your church—I'll turn deacon when you become parson! You and I together ought to run the machine!"

"No such good news, Lew. My reformation does not reach outside of my art. But, to tell the truth, I don't see what the —— you and I are painters for?"

"For? What does any body paint for? Because it's an agreeable way of getting a living. It's genteel; light work in winter, pleasant strolls in summer, reasonable pay, good company --why, it's the jolliest kind of a life!"

"That's about it; and I turn away from it. It seems to me that one cannot live an earnest life in such a way. At any rate, I've got to find out how to do something more, or quit."

Frank's mother perceived the difference in her son's moods. The change to seriousness was great. He began to read Ruskin's works with avidity.

The scales were falling from Frank's eyes. Little by little the great aims of life were rising before him, and asserted their full power upon him. Then, his art fell down into its true place, and became a mere instrument; no longer was it an end.

He began to experience an earnest desire to be an actor, through his art, in the movements of society.

"Shall all the struggles of man go on and I have no part in them? Shall men emerge painfully, before my eyes, from rudeness, and I, ordained a priest of beauty, reach forth no hand to help?"

Frank Esel looked back upon his joyous dalliance with art in former days with repugnance. His old portfolios he brought out to burn. Many of his sketches he did destroy. But, while in the act, it occurred to him that an occasional sight of the things which he once thought very clever might be a good discipline, and measure his progress. All those which in the days of his blindness he had thought very fine, he laid back into portfolios, and burned the rest.

His mother did not think it prudent to question her son. From his summer's letters she knew that he had been greatly delighted with Rose Wentworth. Whatever solicitude or curiosity she may have felt to know the real state of his heart, she did not deem it proper to be inquisitive.

If indeed Frank could have formed a connection with Dr. Wentworth's family, she would have esteemed her son, and herself, most fortunate. That something had greatly influenced him was too plain to be overlooked even by the dimmest eye. But what it was she could not divine. On the one hand, there was a sobriety tinged with sadness—the rising within him of new forces,—a persistence and industry in which, hitherto, he had been signally deficient, but which now became a marked feature of his life. She hardly knew her own son. His tenderness for her was if any thing greater than before. Now and then his old boisterousness of glee would break out again and he would frolic with her in a whirl of gayety almost delirious. But such seasons grew rare. He seemed more and more like one full of some inward and controlling purpose, toward which he was turning all the forces of his life.

On the other hand, he spoke of Rose with the utmost frankness. Scarcely a day passed that some word of hers was not repeated. This did not seem compatible with the shyness of beginning love.

One day his mother ventured to say:

"Frank, it seems to me that Rose Wentworth is your model, and the very arbiter of your opinions. She must be a remarkable young woman."

With no disturbance of manner Frank replied ingenuously:

"I do not think that I owe so much to what Miss Rose said as to what she *was* herself."

"You mean that she drew you to her by the charms of her person more than by her conversation?"

"No, not that. I was thinking of the influence which I have derived from that family, in my own art. What Dr. Wentworth and his family said was certainly more instructive to me than any thing I had ever heard until then. It was he that urged me to study Ruskin. We were sitting on the door-step one evening, and Miss Rose was questioning her father about some statement of Ruskin's that seemed extravagant. He replied:

"'It is extravagant, my dear. Ruskin is full of wildness, and tangles himself up with himself like a vine twisting on itself. You read Ruskin just as you explore a region, finding many treasures and much that you avoid. He has his brier thickets, his contorted trees, his muddy morasses. But, taken as a whole, the landscape is rich and grand. Ruskin is like a forest, on whose edges and in whose depths are many noxious plants—but these bear no proportion to the magnitude of the woods, the grandeur of the trees, and the sublimity, in winter and summer, of the music which the wind draws from their boughs and tops.'

"Then, turning to me, he said:

"'Have you studied Ruskin?'

"I replied—'I have read portions—extracts—from his works.

"After a pause, he said in a very gentle way, in an undertone, but earnestly—'My young friend, Ruskin is not to be read in extracts—nor simply read either. You ought to take him as an infection. He should throw you into a fever. The whole system should be pervaded by it. He is like those diseases which renovate the system. Do not try to check it. Let it run its full period. Afterward you will recover well; you will throw off much. You will retain, perhaps, little. But your whole constitution will be changed. You will observe differently, think differently, reason differently, all the rest of your life.'

"'But, father,' said Rose, 'is it not a pity that one so good should not be better.'

"'Certainly it is. What then? We are glad to gather thirty bushels of wheat from an acre of ground, but there were two tons of straw and chaff required to grow the wheat. Would you have a man all grain? Yet, worshipping is natural; and our first drift, when one affects us well, is to begin shaping him in our thoughts to an ideal perfectness. Then comes the shock of disclosure. Every body is imperfect; and strong natures, strong enough to overturn old errors, and fight great battles, are likely to be too strong to walk safely in harness and drag our phaetons and chaises!'"

Frank had been led along by his reminiscences, till he forgot the point he had started for. After a moment's silence he started up.

"Oh, mother, I forgot to say the only thing I meant to—That which I most felt in the Wentworths was the intimate relationship and personal sympathy which existed between them and nature. Her father has brought Miss Rose up to feel that all of nature is, literally, but a way which God has of making known to us his feelings, tastes and thoughts. It was so from her infancy, that sounds, colors, forms, phenomena, did not stand for mere science, but suggested a living presence. It was unconscious. Others *went* to nature. She dwelt in it always. I had never before met with such deep insight, such a pure love, such reverent admiration, such fulness and richness of knowledge, in a young person, too, most accomplished and attractive."

"I should have thought, Frank, that such charms would have been irresistible."

His only reply was:

"Too unequal—too unequal."

The winter rolled away speedily. Frank Esel was never so little pleased with the result of his work. He had never labored so hard. But men beginning new courses are like ploughed meadows. The roughness and waste are indispensable precursors of the new sward. Frank never had advanced so far, and yet never seemed to himself to have moved so little. But as this was his appointed life-work, he came out of repeated discouragements with renewed courage, and kept bravely on.

Already Spring had supplanted Winter, and now Summer was fulfilling the tender prophecies of Spring. It was full time for him to leave the city. But this year his mother would go with him; and early in July, Frank, in over measure of joy, found himself again in Norwood, and among friends that he had earned to regard as his benefactors.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LEAVING COLLEGE.

BARTON'S four years were ended. The senior vacation had come and passed. He had won the first honors of his class, and there was not a member of the class—not even the two who had most nearly been his rivals—that did not heartily accord to him the first rank. He was not simply first as a student, but as a good fellow. None led him in athletic exercises. In a certain degree he was accessible, familiar, and most gay and social; yet it was with a reserve that showed that he did not carry all his nature on his sleeve.

He was one of the men whom close study had not invalided. He was, if possible, more vigorous and elastic than when he entered college. When he returned to take the honors of his class at Commencement, it was agreed by every young lady of taste that a finer form and nobler face had never been seen in those streets.

His townsmen were rightly proud of Barton's distinction. His father was universally respected. Barton himself was popular. His intimate friends were among the most influential citizens. All Norwood looked forward this year to the Commencement-day, and it seemed as if the town itself was about to go over to Amherst on the occasion.

Tommy Taft, too, was to go! This was Dr. Wentworth's arrangement. Nor had he ever done a kinder thing. To go to Amherst and see his boy, Barton, receive the first honors, was a glimpse of paradise! What these honors were to be he had not the slightest idea. He was in much uncertainty as to the nature of a college. Was it a sort of factory? The distant buildings, which he had often looked at through his spy-glass,—a relic of his seafaring life—might easily be mistaken for mills. Did they drill boys there, as on shipboard? or what on earth did they do? When Barton explained their studies and recitations, Tommy looked wise and nodded his head knowingly, but it is doubtful if he had any very luminous ideas on the subject.

The Commencement-day proper was on Wednesday, but there were services on Tuesday which Dr. Wentworth wished to hear, and duties which, as a Trustee, he had to perform, which required him to go over on Tuesday. Tommy Taft was to come over on Wednesday in an early conveyance arranged for this occasion.

The morning came. Rose and her mother were ready. The doctor would let his own horses rest, and Hiram Beers was to come with a stylish team and open carriage.

He came promptly upon appointment. The boys cheered him as he left the stable. His deep chestnut-colored Morgan horses—matched to a hair,—and, what is more rare, matched in gait and spirit,—came out of the yard on tip-toe. They did not rear, nor run sideways, nor kick.

"That would do under saddle," said Hiram; "but when the harness is put on, sech things is immoralities in horses. Why them nags is well brought up. They are jest like good boys goin' to meetin' on Sabbath-day; they don't play, though they may giggle a little."

Down the street went Hiram, looking neither to the right or left, though every soul, right and left, was looking at him. Do you suppose he didn't feel it?

"Wal," said Tommy to him, as Hiram was loosening one strap, drawing another a hole tighter, dressing a lock of hair under the head-piece to tassel below the eyes, and tucking up his pets generally—"wal, Hiram, you've done it this time."

"Of course I have, Tommy. Why not?"

"You've got a pretty pair of gals there,—a pretty pair as ever I laid eyes on. A fellow might be proud of bein' captain in such a consarn."

"Wal, suppose I am proud, Tommy. What may a fellow be proud of, if he mayn't be proud when he's got sech a team as that afore him, and sech folks behind him as I'm goin' to drive? I tell you Wentworth's a whole team, and his wife's a woman, I tell ye! and Rose," said Hiram, slapping his leg in a kind of ecstasy—"Rose is—well, she's enough to make a feller cross 'cause he ain't young and handsome and rich, and she in love with him! I tell you, Tommy, I'm out for a day of it. And it's my opinion that Solomon, in all his glory, never went over to Commencement rigged out like this."

The conversation was cut short by the arrival of the Cathcarts Dr. Buell and Judge Bacon were to go over, and Mr. Brett, Mr. and Mrs. Templeton, and several families besides. This year all Norwood felt complimented that one of its boys was to carry off the honors.

Hiram took the lead. Not a smile was on his face. His small eyes flashed out from under his projecting eyebrows with uncommon brightness, and his good spirits showed themselves in endless speeches to his horses; in salutations to every body that he met, whether he knew them or not; in a neat touch of his whip on a dog that ran out to salute the company; in twirling the lash round the neck of a goose that stood pensively looking at the road full of people, and dragging her several yards, saying:

"Come along; don't squawk; lots of your sort been to college afore you."

They soon came to the bridge across the Connecticut. Hiram must have a word with the woman who took toll. She was some sixty years old, of sandy complexion, with a thin and hard face; her large spectacles, mounted on the top of her head, looked, as Hiram said, "like the dormer windows in the roof of the doctor's house."

"Miss Palfry, have you seen a man come across here this mornin'—a rather big man—a little cast in one eye—looks as though he was winkin' at you all the time—red hair, wears it long—and has a red handkerchief round his neck? Rides on a gray horse—well, something of the size of Cathcart's yonder?"

"A man with red hair and handkerchief?"

"Yes."

"On a gray horse?"

"Yes—with a long tail."

"Let me see—Polly!—here, Polly!—have you seen a man this mornin' comin' across, with red hair?" Hiram struck in—"With red hair, and white-tail horse?"

"About what time?"

"How do I know? That's what I want to find out. He had a porkmanty behind him, and a green umbrella."

"Wal, I guess he han't come along yet. Shall I tell him any thing if he comes?"

"Yes; tell him that I think he had better stop, when he gits where he wants to go to."

And with that he gave a sharp cluck or sort of throat-whistle, which every horse understands, and in a moment disappeared in the covered bridge. The woman looked after him with the slightest possible look of humorous vexation.

"Go 'long, you old fool! I don't believe he's expectin' *any* body. Well, I shall learn one of these days not to believe a word Hiram says. Might a known he was quizzin'—shouldn't wonder if he died laughin', and cracked jokes at his own funeral!"

"Hiram," said Dr. Wentworth, "who is this man you inquired for?"

"Well, sir, when I find out, I'll let you know. A long bridge to walk over, Doctor?"

"Do people always mind the law, and keep upon a walk?"

"That depends. When the boys are on a spree, and have had a little suthin', I allus raises a trot about here: they thinks the bridge too long. But when a feller's along with his gal, he allus thinks the bridge too short; and he's particular about keepin' the law. Only last week I was about here, and I heerd a sort of smack behind me, and the horses thought I was chirrupin' for 'em to go on, and started off. But I cooled 'em down and began to whistle like, so that you couldn't hear any little sound. The fact is, Doctor, young folks will be young folks, and I never was one of them as wanted to larf at 'em. Let 'em have their time. I think it rather beautiful-like to see young folks take to each other. The Lord knows they'll have trouble enough afore they get through livin' with each other, and it would be a shame to spile the beginnin', when it's all sweet and pretty like.

"No," said Hiram, virtuously straightening up; "when Zeke Lash driv over one day, and interrupted some little cooin' and billin' that he had no business with, and I heard him tellin' of it in the stable—'You're a darned fool,' sez I, 'and if it had been any of my folks, I'd made you taste the horsewhip, every inch of it, from the tip of the lash to the butt end. I'd as soon throw stones at the birds whirlin' and kissin' in the air. When they are old, and we're used to 'em, I don't object to throw a stone or two at a robin. But any feller that would do it when they fust come, he's a mean cuss!"

But other business soon diverted Hiram's attention. After leaving the bridge, and while he was driving at an easy trot, there came up behind him a span of horses, driven by Zeke Lash, who held out in Norwood that no man could equal *him* in the management of horses. Watching his chance, he dashed by Hiram. Without turning his head, just as he slid past him, Zeke looked at Hiram out of the corner of his eye, with a glance which pierced him, as if it had been a sting.

Hiram changed his tobacco from the left to the right side of his mouth and chewed it with uncommon energy. But in no other way did he show that he felt himself ill used.

"Who is that, Hiram, that drives such a fine team?" said Dr. Wentworth.

"It's Zeke Lash. He and Overman have set up a new stable."

"What sort of a fellow is he? I've seen him about the streets a good deal lately."

"Wal, he's cute. There's nobody else that can touch him with a ten-foot pole in pickin' out horses. As for tendin' and drivin', he's a perfect revelation—a new dispensation, miracles and all. At any rate, that's his own opinion about it."

"And do you think so too, Hiram?"

"I have my own opinion. He's cunnin' enough, that's sartain. You never know what he'll do. He's like my old Tiger. He'll be good-natured for weeks, and some day, when you ain't thinkin' on't, he'll give you a lift with his heel and land you t'other side of the barn. But it's not my way to talk about him. Mebbe he'll keep ahead of me all the way to Amherst. He's got a light wagon, and only two in it, and I'm drivin' five. Never mind!"

As they drew near to the village the road inclined upward. Hiram had kept well up behind, and forced Zeke to trot up hill steadily. Just as they came to the street, where a wider track gave him opportunity, Hiram gave a low hiss, which acted on his horses like fire on powder. Hitherto their trot had been gay, nimble and graceful, with short and springy steps. At Hiram's signal they instantly let out a long reaching pace, crouching down nearer the ground; and swinging with a freer action, they caught Zeke's team, that now had gone into a thundering pace, held it for a moment, just to make sure that it was doing all it could, and that all was fair, and then with a spendid rush they swept away from them and rolled back the clouds of dust in their faces.

The whole thing was so sudden that Dr. Wentworth had no time to protest against coming into town at such a rate. Rose excited with the race, was even more delighted with the humor of the whole thing—with Hiram's characteristic shrewdness and at her father's ludicrous position. The boys cheered, and not a few judges of horses nodded as they went past, as much as to say:

"That'll do, Hiram!" "I guess that *will* do," said Hiram to his nags. "We'll save up the rest till next time. Whoa! come down, beauties,—come, come, childen—don't be agitated," said Hiram, in his blandest tones; "remember where you are, boys! Whoa! that's enough! nicely done, ponies!"

"I tell you," said Hiram, turning slightly toward the doctor, "these horses are jest as near human as is good for 'em. A good horse has sense jest as much as a man has; and he's proud too, and he loves to be praised, and he knows when you treat him with respect. A good horse has the best pints of a man without his failin's."

"What do you think becomes of horses, Hiram, when they die?" said Rose.

"Wal, Miss Rose, it's my opinion that there's use for horses hereafter, and that you'll find there's a horse-heaven. There's Scripture for that, too."

"Ah!" said Rose, a little surprised at these confident assertions. "What Scripture do you mean?"

"Why in the book of Revelations! Don't it give an account of a white horse, and a red horse, and black horses, and gray horses? I've allers s'posed that when it said Death rode on a pale horse, it must have been gray, 'cause it had mentioned white once already. In the ninth chapter, too, it says there was an army of two hundred thousand horsemen. Now I should like to know where they got so many horses in heaven, if none of 'em that die off here go there? It's my opinion that a good horse 's a darned sight likelier to go to heaven than a bad man!"

With this Hiram rounded up with a driver's flourish before the house at which the doctor and his party had taken rooms.

Already the town was astir with excitement. Commencement-week is the one week of the year that every family, from the highest to the lowest, feels alike. Commencement-day is the rival of Thanksgiving-day. New England has always been economical of holidays. Christmas she threw away with indignant emphasis, as stained and spattered with Papal superstition. The only two festivals were Thanksgiving-day and Fast-day—the last to put in the seed with, and the former to celebrate the year's harvest. New England never made provision for amusements.

Amusements have for ages, in Europe, been the bribes which governments threw to the people for their political rights. Fiddles were cheaper than ballot-boxes. Kings, formerly, would pay liberally to amuse, but nothing to instruct. The old Puritan, regarding games and amusements as poisonous flowers, whose odor bewitched the senses and stupefied manhood, abhorred them. It was not a hatred of pleasure, but of the seductive purposes to which it had been cunningly put.

It was the practical philosophy of New England that a free and intelligent people, thrifty in business, managing their own matters, and zealously occupied in building up the commonwealth, had excitement enough and variety of interest enough in their normal affairs, and that earnest men did not need, like children, to be fed on frolic and amusement. This view was carried to an extreme. But it was a reaction from a use of amusements which was degrading to manhood and inconsistent with the freedom of the commonwealth.

On the next morning Rose was called early, for her father wished to see the sunrise from the college chapel-tower. Many men graduate from Amherst without knowing that they leave behind them unseen one of the fairest sights that will ever bless their eyes—a sunrise from the chapel-tower.

It was yet a half hour before the sun would come over the Pelham hills; but the east was all aglow. Scuds and scarfs of cloud seemed shot up from below the horizon as if from a crater of colors. Long beams of light rayed out, fan-form, as if there had been a fibrous structure to the light.

They had scarcely turned to look upon this flaming East before they were joined by Barton Cathcart, who had in some unaccountable manner learned of Rose's intention to see the sun rise upon the valley of the Connecticut.

They had hardly exchanged greetings when the sun shot its light along the notched ridges of the hills on the south, of which Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom are the westward summits.

At the same instant it glowed along the west, and upon Sugar-loaf at the north. In a moment more the valley, in its length and breadth, was full of light. A slender film of white hovered along the line of the Connecticut river. Beyond it, shining out and glittering, the white-housed villages gleamed from among the trees on the far hill-sides.

"This is a scene less admirable but more lovely," said Dr. Wentworth, "than many which men travel far to see."

"Father, you have seen the sun rise on the Rigi and upon other Swiss mountains?"

"Yes. It is a sight of unequalled grandeur; but from high mountains the landscape is generalized by its distance from the eye. It excites the imagination more than the feelings. It inspires a kind of separateness and lonesomeness, which seem to be constituent elements of the sentiment of grandeur.

"But if one would feel nearness and affection—perhaps lower but more pleasurable emotions—he must be near the objects seen. A hill for prospect should be so placed as to get a wide view without great elevation."

"Barton," said Rose, "is this a favorite resort of the students?"

"I suspect not," said Barton, smiling as if the idea were even comical. "I have been here many scores of times, both at morning and at evening, and I remember to have met but once or twice any of the boys here. Indeed, I have been attracted to it by its solitude."

"You must have seen this valley in many fine varieties of atmosphere," said the doctor, "if you have frequented this place. Few persons that I meet seem to have been struck with the variety which nature produces by vaporous vestments. We notice the atmosphere in its extreme conditions, but not in all the fine intermediate gradations. The world puts on a thousand garments, and seldom two alike. Men and women are so busy with their own apparel that they have no time to behold the wonderful vestures which God lets down upon the earth."

Barton's appearance was striking. Rose's presence, his own approaching farewell to the scenes of so much enjoyment, stirred him to the utmost feeling. But, according to his nature, he repressed all signs of it, and grew calm as he grew intense. Yet the light came through. His face had a high and commanding look, and every word he spoke came as a tone comes from a chord well strung. Yet there was no stolen glance at Rose. There was neither hiding nor revealing. There was on both parts simplicity and ingenuousness.

"Some mornings there must have been which stand out in your memory with peculiar force?" said Rose.

"Scarcely two have been alike. But some few stand out with extraordinary distinctness. One morning I came up here when the whole valley lay tranquilly in a fog. Only the tops of Holyoke and Tom appeared, and they were like islands in a wide sea. It was very impressive. It seemed as if a flood had submerged the earth and drowned all the living people, and I was left a solitary spectator, looking out over this wide, desolate and silent sea. But as soon as the sun rose, its action was magical. There seem to be in vapor very different degrees of sensibility to the sunlight. It is often sluggish, and is little affected by hours of sunshine. But that morning, no sooner did the rays pierce it than it began to writhe and twist and roll up in all forms of convolution, as if suffering pain. In a moment openings appeared, through which I saw the earth beneath, and the first distinct picture happened to be Norwood itself, which I looked down upon as through an open window in the heavens whose sides shut out all else. The whole scene lasted scarcely half an hour."

"What was the other one?"

"It was an evening scene. I was on the east side of the college, when I noticed a singular glow in the air. The grove, the students, every thing seemed roseate. I knew that something was going on worth seeing, and made for this place as speedily as possible. The scene that burst on me was wonderful. The heavens seemed to be drenched with rose-color. All the west glowed with it. It ascended to the zenith. It seemed to pour over and down to the very horizon in the east. A slight haze, or rather scales of thin vapor filled the hemisphere, and these were saturated with rose-color. Gradually it changed to flame-color, and then the landscape was more wonderful still. Fearful, it was. It seemed to be like a universal conflagration. I thought of the language of prophecy, When the moon shall be turned to blood; and of that Great Day when the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The whole world stood in an unnatural trance, and the most familiar things looked wild and almost fearful. But the vision was of short duration. Suddenly, and while I was looking, the color was caught up again out of the air. Things resumed their common look, and the glory had left no effects behind."

"No effects?" said Rose. "Did it not leave its effects upon your mind? Did it not leave a new color in the imagination? new conceptions of Divine power?"

"In truth it did. It awaked all my mother in me!"

"What?"

"My mother has the sense of infiniteness and mysteriousness more than any that I have ever known. Something of her spirit I have inherited."

"I know what you mean," said Rose, quickly.

"This is the true moral effect," said Dr. Wentworth, "of the more impressive natural phenomena. Men grow intensely egotistical. They are saturated in human life, as if God had made nothing but men, and men only in their everyday uses and employments. Whatever gives a shock to this trite egotism, and awakens, even for a moment, in men, a sense of God's presence in all nature, cannot but inspire a more wholesome spirit than that which usually frets and weaves out the over-busy day.

"Such days as Barton mentions stimulate one with surprise, and serve, as is said, in medical practice, as *alteratives;* but I doubt whether a recurrence of them would give so much pleasure as is derived from days of ordinary sunshine. Nothing is so full of joy to me as the simple sunshine of days following rains o snows, when the atmosphere is washed clean, when the blue deep and sober, when all objects rise before the eye clearly defined, and with what seems to me, always, earnestness. There is an exhilaration in simple sunlight. A flower is beautiful; forests and mountains are noble; clouds measure the whole scale, from simple beauty to superlative grandeur. But, after all, sunlight, as an object of pleasure, of admiration, and even of affection, in the sense in which the term is applied to insentient things, is far beyond them all. There are no storms or convulsions in it. Its waves fill up the universe, but never rage nor utter sound. There you have unwasting power, in utter silence. Sounds are very impressive, but silence is far more so; and to me no silence is like that of universal sunlight. Out of its stillness come all those energies which awaken life upon the globe It is father of the forest and the field. It creates the currents of the ocean and the storms of the air, and yet the sunlight itself is forever tranquil. It is to me the most impressive feature of the world. It is that symbol which most nearly represents the universality of God, the energy and fruitfulness of Divine power, and its modesty, as well.

"For, I often reflect how it seems to hide itself, by revealing all the objects of creation. It lives and rejoices in what it creates. But sunlight itself is far more beautiful, infinitely more wonderful than are the innumerable broods of life that spring from it. When I am in perfect physical health, there is no delight which I am more grateful for than a simple sunshine, in a clear atmosphere. I never so much wonder as then at that unaccountable propensity of men to forge religious symbols.

"I admit the need which men have of some concrete representation of invisible truths. For that express purpose the whole globe has been fashioned. But men are absolutely afraid of Materialism in religion! They dread to use the instruments which God ordained. With the saddest egotism, they set up artificial signs that at best but poorly suggest the pure, the true, the good, the infinite. Stars and suns give way to candles; cotton and wool from the loom set aside the garments of light with which God glorifies the world; and while ten million flowers around the world offer perfume, men burn handfuls of frankincense in cramped temples. When the perfect day comes, all men will worship, and in Nature they will find all the symbols needed to set forth the glory of the incommunicable God."

"But, father," said Rose, "did not God himself appoint ritual and symbols for his people?"

"For a stone-race, too gross to understand the imagery of nature, he gave, as it were, a translation designed to bring them back to the primal and grander temple service. When this had answered its purpose, he abolished it, and in the Advent he swept altar and vestment away, and, opening the realm of Nature, he revealed the hidden truth that it was the realm of Grace."

"But, my dear father, is not nature corrupt?"

"What nature? Human life is corrupt enough; but is this habitable globe, its generous tones, its munificent seasons, its pictorial scenery, its marvellous processes, its gorgeous imagery, its days and nights, summers and winters, its oceans and air, and sun and sunlight, are these corrupt? Since when have the heavens ceased to declare the glory of God?"

Barton and Rose had met during his college course several times. Yet, their intercourse had been so different from former days, when they met every week, that it was in effect separation.

Those who are ripe and fixed in their opinions may be separated long without losing sympathy or acquaintance. But in youth, when the mind is just opening, when opinions are changing, and while the whole character is subject every year to the impress of new forces, a long separation is, virtually, the loss of acquaintance, particularly with persons of a deep nature. Conscious of great changes in themselves, and supposing like ones to have taken place in others, there is an exquisite curiosity to know each other again, and to prove whether both have grown in sympathy toward a common centre, or whether development has been dissimilar and repellent. There is in every sensitive soul a fine jealousy that refuses, after long separation, to be taken again at the old estimate. Barton did not commit the mistake, either in manner or feeling, of saying:

"We shall be intimate now just as we were four years ago!" His manner said, "Four years ago, as boys and girls, we were friends. You have passed on to a higher level."

Rose had more than attained to the utmost bounds which his imagination had ever placed for improvement. Barton, more than ever, felt in her presence a kind of hopelessness. His love for Rose had with manhood gained strength and breadth. The interviews during his senior vacation had shown no change in her but the regular and beautiful evolution of a nature that had inherited without struggle the harmony which in others comes by violent conflicts, or not at all. If she had seemed good and noble before, she seemed to his riper judgment yet lovelier, and further removed from need of him.

But the consciousness of a feeling far deeper than he supposed Rose suspected, the constraint which he laid upon it, the attempt which he made to leave Rose free from the slightest pressure of his wishes and feelings, wrought a kind of formal manner—at times, almost coldness. He was not acting from a selfish pride, unduly solicitous for his own standing, but from a high and conscientious determination not to embarrass the woman whom he most honored and loved.

When Tommy Taft reached Amherst on Commencement-day, his first desire was to ascend the hill and inspect the college buildings. In the confusion of the day, he might easily have been left to find out his own way without benefit of explanations. Indeed, he had gone alone up to the college buildings. He had looked curiously in at the dormitories, had gone to the chapel, and looked wonderingly at the recitation rooms, and with some surprise at the "crockery shop," as he called the room of philosophical instruments. But, luckily, he met Hiram Beers, whose frequent visits to Amherst had made him familiar with every portion of its grounds and buildings. Under such good pilotage, Tommy Taft proceeded to the Library, whose magnitude impressed him profoundly. Drawing near to Hiram, he said, with a knowing wink:

"That is what they come for, eh?"

"What do you mean, old fellow?" said Hiram.

"They come to college to read all them books? I don't wonder it takes 'em four years. Do you s'pose Barton has got all this inside of him?"

"Very likely," said Hiram; "but it's mighty poor feed, I should think; for the fellers that read most git the leanest."

"Do you know which end they begin at?" said Tommy, with a curious awe.

"Wal," said Hiram, "I've been here before, but I never saw many folks a readin' here. I guess the fellers play ball pretty much all summer, and read winters."

They proceeded to the Natural History Cabinets. Tommy was exceedingly delighted with the shells. They seemed to take him back to familiar objects.

"Now that's somethin' wuth seein'. But I never dreamed there was as many bugs in all creation as they have stuck up here. It's surprisin'! Wonder how they got 'em?"

Hiram showed him into the geological rooms, where were the famous bird-track slabs of Connecticut River, so dear to Professor Hitchcock.

"There, Tommy. What do you think of that for bird-tracks?"

Tommy looked at them closely, with his head cocked first on one side and then on the other.

"Them's pretty big birds, Hiram. But you won't make me believe there was ever birds as heavy as that!"

"Heavy as what?"

"Why, heavy enough to make tracks in solid stones," said Tommy, with a little indignation at being supposed capable of such imposition. "I can stand a deal of stuffin', as I tell Dr. Buell, when he preaches on the doctrines. Sez I,—Doctor I can stand it as long as you can. If you ain't satisfied, jest go on and fetch out some more. But I be darned, Hiram, if you can stuff me with these 'ere stories."

"Well," said Hiram, "I wa'n't there when they did it, but they say it's so. You'd better ask Barton."

Tommy had not half satisfied his curiosity when he was warned that, if he would hear the speaking, he must make haste to the church where the Commencement exercises were to be held. This village church was the antithesis of the Temple of Minerva upon the Acropolis. *That* exhibited the utmost degree to which symmetry and beauty could be carried. Taking the other direction, this village church, which was a Grecian temple with a cupola on its back, demonstrated how far it was possible for man to go in the direction of monstrous ugliness. What can be done in that case no one will ever imagine who has not seen this remarkable effort at architecture. It left nothing more to possibility in that kind.

Hither flocked rustic beauties. Hither streamed hundreds of honest-faced farmers, whose sons were in college, or had been. The procession was advancing and the band of music was filling all the air with exhilarating sounds. All was excitement and bustle.

By great boldness and some strength, Tommy forced himself near the front of the gallery, where he could see and hear all. A sly use of his wooden leg was of great service. Did any one refuse to move, Tommy, accidentally putting his wooden leg upon his toe, never failed to produce a sudden retraction of that member. Of course, as he deftly slipped himself forward into the crevice thus opened, he was quite unconscious of any mischief. Any one could see that, who looked upon his hard, unmoving face.

Through all the weary variety Tommy kept watch. Others changed places, went out and returned, but not Tommy Taft. He came there to see Barton graduate, and that he meant to see, without regard to time or fatigue. The heat was great, but Tommy had found greater in the tropics. He wiped his face with his great red cotton handkerchief, with such vigorous rubs that one feared lest his features should disappear under such a currying process. He joined heartily in all the applause which was given one by one to the speakers. But when, at length, Barton appeared, the old man seemed in raptures. "Now you'll hear him. That's the boy! Now, hark!"

At the passages which elicited commendation, Tommy's foot joined in with an emphasis that left nothing to be desired in the way of noise.

Far different were Rachel Cathcart's feelings. Not far from her son she sat, and when he rose, it seemed to her more as a vision than a reality. Was this indeed her own son? the very babe that she had brought forth? the child which she had tended? the boy that she reared? the little farmer that rose in her memory as he used to appear when at work? She was like one in a dream! His voice sounded strange in her ears. This great crowd of people, all looking up with admiration and sympathy, and her own son, the centre and cause of all! She scarcely heard what he said. When loud plaudits startled her, she looked as one roused from reverie. At length the valedictory was delivered. It was indeed a farewell. Barton had felt in his very soul, and probably more than any of his class-mates, the full sentiment of parting, and it gave a tenderness and solemnity to both his words and manner which touched all the audience to tears.

When the services were closed, many there were who congratulated Barton. But, with a fine delicacy, there were more who offered respectful congratulations to 'Biah Cathcart and Rachel. Both seemed willing to avoid their son in such a crowd. They extricated themselves from the throng, and repaired to their lodgings, that none might look upon the joy of a family whose love and pride had that day been so signally blessed.

CHAPTER XXX.

DOCTOR BUELL'S SORROW.

The trustees of Norwood Academy consulted the universal wish when they appointed Barton Cathcart to take charge of the institution. He did not long hesitate. Local prejudice in Barton's case was disarmed, and none more ardently urged him to accept than those who had known him from his boyhood. On the other hand, there were weighty reasons for assuming this position. It gave him an immediate pecuniary support. It spared him a precipitate choice of his profession. It brought him home for a term of years to his family, and especially to his mother. When the transition from boyhood takes place, men are apt to assert their individuality with some jealousy of parental interference, and break away in search of their own liberty. After manhood is reached, and something of the world is learned, men go back to their homes with a love which is no longer a mere childish feeling, but an educated affection, competent to weigh and measure. This second love of a child to its parents is so much richer, deeper, and more enduring than any other, that it is worth any price of intermediate suffering.

But another reason more influential than all was, perhaps, the least demonstrative in his thoughts. He would be near to Rose Wentworth.

In this case, as in so many others in the life of every honorable nature, his feelings proved wiser than any mere reasonings would have done. Rose was not one likely to "fall in love." She might grow to love. But it would be a gradual unfolding.

As she was benevolent, affable with all, buoyant in spirits, one not deeply acquainted with her nature would be apt to imagine himself rapidly advancing in her graces, and would flatter himself that he had secured a sympathy which might be carried forward by his own will to every range of love. But, in a full and large nature, friendliness is but the outer court, love is the holy of holies. Into that enters only the ordained of God.

If Barton had been far wiser than he was in reading the secrets of the heart, he could not have done better than by leaving his hopes to Time, and to the results of a renewed intercourse, no longer as children, but as man and woman, developed by study, and ripened by some degree of experience in adult life.

Barton entered upon his duties with a calm earnestness which marked his nature. His spirit was soon felt in the whole school. Before the winter closed the Academy was filled to its utmost capacity. Selecting his own assistants, he brought to his aid those who would work in full sympathy with him.

He did not confine his efforts to the school alone. The village Lyceum opened for him a sphere of activity which he was not slow to enter.

He was foremost among the young men in all exhilarating and manly sports. He joined a military company, and becoming deeply interested in military science, soon rose to the command. In these and various other ways, Barton preserved vigorous health, and that sympathy with active daily life which prevented him from sinking into the recluse habits of a mere student, and from every trace or trait of pedagogic formality.

In school he was the master, and out of school the genial leader of the boys, and in both spheres raised them apparently without an effort.

It was during this winter and spring of 1858 that two events occurred that produced the greatest effects upon his after life. Before we enter upon the first and most momentous it is necessary to precede it by some notice of events which were in many respects intimately concerned with it.

Our readers have already formed some opinion of Dr. Buell. But thus far it has been casual and exterior. We must ask them now to go with us to the parson's house, and to see him in his family life, with all its peculiarities.

The minister's house was as white as paint could make it, and its window-blinds were of no flimsy Paris-green color, but of a good old-fashioned green—so green that you would almost think it black. Not a blind is open on the front—all is closed, orderly, clean. A front door-yard there is; in one corner, an elm tree, whose wide-curving branches were the only graceful thing about the place, and, in the far corner, a clump of lilacs, seven or eight stems springing from a centre, and grown almost to the dimensions of trees.

At the back of the house was a vegetable garden; and, at the far end, a stable large enough for a cow and horse, and for the shelter of an old-fashioned chaise. An outlying lot of land sufficed to furnish the hay required for the horse and cow, and a small strip was devoted to potatoes. The horse was the parson's favorite. He literally had no faults. He was never known to kick, or to bite any thing but food. Hay constituting his principal food, a larger quantity was required than would have been if oats or corn had furnished more concentrated nourishment in smaller bulk. Nature, ever kind to her creatures, gradually enlarged the barrel of the horse until his belly was puffed out far beyond any requirements of beauty. A large, mild, and sleepy eye revealed but half the quietness of his disposition. His legs might be handled by boys. You might sit down safely between his hind legs. There was no liberty which you could not take, except that of fast driving. You might pour a bushel of potatoes suddenly upon his haunches without producing excitement—not, however, because he was lifeless, but from mere self-possession; for a peck of oats (a luxury seldom ventured!) at the other extremity quickly showed there was life in him.

He was safe. "Slow and sure," was his maxim. When the good parson was once seated in the chaise, the events were as follows: when the self-possessed animal, with his head and neck declining a little below the line of his back, felt the reins in the doctor's hands, he opened his eyes; and having been standing on his three legs, the fourth crooked up and resting on the edge of the hoof, he brought them all squarely under him, as if saying, 'I am all here, sir!" Next the doctor pulled both reins, and they were pulled. Then he lapped them both upon the back, with a gentle slap, and pulled one of them with some decision. The time had come. The horse started, walked into the road, and then, after several admonitions, fell into an easy jog, which satisfied the parson's ambition. But no persuasion could carry that trot up the slightest rise in the ground. It was this habit of stopping early in ascending and starting again late in descending hills, that secured to this matchless horse long life and immunity from strains

Dr. Buell innocently told Hiram Beers that he never used a bottle of liniment in his life.

Hiram waited till the parson was out of hearing, and then discoursed:

"Wal, I'd bet on that! Bottle of liniment! I should as soon think of liniment on a hoe-handle or a gun-stock! That horse thinks it's always Sunday, and that he's goin' to a funeral all the while. I'd give any body five dollars to git three miles an hour out of that critter! If there was two of 'em they wouldn't go a mile an hour, and four such horses—good gracious! it would take a yoke of oxen to start 'em anyhow!"

If you enter the front door of the minister's house the walls will shine upon you with the unblemished whiteness of "hard-finish." Not a spot of dirt, not an engraving, not a picture, was allowed to mar the fair expanse. The ceiling was white and glistening, the side walls were white; enter the parlor, a large room, consecrated to company, and if the walls had been cut through banks of snow they could not have been whiter or colder. The sitting-room was white and clean. The chambers were all white and all clean, and every chamber was like every other one, and they all together lay like half-a-dozen eggs in a nest.

One or two extraordinary water-color pictures, executed by his wife, as the last consummate efforts of her expiring school-days, had been framed in black, and now hung in the sitting-room. It always pleased Dr. Buell to have visitors notice them, and his invariable comment was, "My wife's paintings!—when she was younger and less occupied. I am told that they are remarkable." They certainly were.

A portrait also, much smoked and tanned, hung over the fireplace. It was grim and sharp-eyed. Very badly painted, it gave one great pleasure in thinking, "Nobody ever looked like that!"

The furniture of the house was very plain, in no wise tending to self-indulgence. The single symptom of luxurious ease was the rocking-chair.

But if once you sat down in it the illusory notion of luxury vanished. It was wooden throughout. Only if some one was sick in the house was there a cushion in it. Its joints by long use had formed a complaining habit, and you might in any part of the house know whether the rocking-chair was in active use. We are obliged to say that it was a treacherous chair. The rockers had been curved to such lines, that if you ventured beyond a very gentle motion the chair would give a backward lurch, as if going over, and there are few things more unsatisfactory to a sober-minded person, careful of appearances, than to be carried over backwards in the midst of a quiet conversation. It is true that the chair never did go over. The shape of the rocker was such, that when the victim had spread his arms and flirted his legs into the air, in an involuntary effort at equilibrium, the chair stopped and set itself firmly, as if it had been blocked, returning again to its normal state only upon a violent effort of its occupant. The neighbors were aware of this propensity and avoided the chair. Strangers usually had an experience with it. The good doctor, or his wife, for the hundredth time, re-assuring them, "Don't be alarmed. It won't go over. I never knew any body to fall?"

The doctor's study was *the* room of the house. Two sides thereof were occupied by shelves laden with books. The supply of theology was large. The critical apparatus for studying both the classical languages and the Hebrew tongue was ample. Histories, sacred and profane, abounded. Select English literature was represented. The doctor's excellent sense was shown in the exclusion from his library of all novels, against which, if we were not writing a history which admits of no delay, we should pause to speak. The Pilgrim's Progress, Milton's Paradise Lost, Scott's Lady of the Lake, and kindred poems, Don Quixote, and two or three of the Waverley series, were found there. But these were not, in his judgment, properly to be called novels. They were beneficial stories. By novels he meant "fictions of an injurious tendency." Accordingly, while he admitted that stories might be sparingly read, novels were always to be avoided.

The order of the doctor's study was extreme. Regularity had well nigh become formality. Could all his books have been of one size, or could each shelf have presented an even line of well-matched books, it would have pleased him well.

But in spite of him his books would be picturesque. Some were in paper, and some in leather; some were of octavo size, and some duodecimo; some few had gilt backs, and others sombre black; paper backs in red, in green, in blue, in gray, and russet still added to the mixture. Some fat and thick books stood in a good-natured way, as if saying: "We've got all we want inside!" while, next to them, some thin volume would look as if pinched in its stomach and forever hungry for contents. There were aristocratic volumes—tall, most respectable, and self-important; and next to these, perhaps, a dumpy little volume, squat, like an asthmatic shoemaker.

Even Dr. Buell, when the afternoon sun poured a yellow light into his favorite study and lit up all the various faces of his books, was conscious in a dim way that there was something more pleasant in their looks than their mere order could account for. But ideality had been well nigh left out in the composition of his mind, and the logical faculty, strong by nature, had struck out its roots by use into all the ground, with such resolute and exhausting growth that the imagination, like a fruit-tree caught in a forest, could never grow larger than a bush, and bore neither fruit nor blossom.

He was thoroughly good. Conscience penetrated every faculty of his mind, and gave rest to none of them. As not unusually happens, he felt most condemned for those very qualities in which he excelled. Neither weather, nor weariness, nor occupation, nor sickness in any common measure could hold him back from those ministrations which he had assumed. Unselfish to a degree unusual even with the benevolent, he reproached himself every day with self-indulgence. Never sparing himself or his time when the poor or the sick needed his ministerial offices, he carried in his heart a feeling that he was guilty of much waste of time and of negligence in the best use of that time which he employed.

With the material world he had no other relations than such as served the practical and material wants of men. There was little beauty to him in the seasons, though much of usefulness. Colors had little charm for him. Forms seldom attracted his notice. In short, the artist eye and the poet's sympathy for nature seemed utterly foreign to his mind.

Mrs. Buell was one of those women who, alone, are feeble and colorless, but who, when joined to others, draw to themselves the strength and character of their surroundings. Like a vine, she had all the strength of the tree around which she twined and upon which she grew. Her father's house had been always the home of ministers visiting the town. She was educated to regard ministers of the Gospel as the complete ideals of manhood. When the prospect arose before her of being a minister's wife, she could hardly convince herself that the Lord had reserved for her so great a mercy. To her natural and ardent love of Dr. Buell as a man, she added the uttermost reverence for his office, and her household duties seemed to her a perpetual religious service, as much so as if she had lived in a temple, he a priest and she priestess. With a sweet, confiding nature she accepted her husband's mind, and only used her own when his was not at hand. She never disputed his word or doubted his wisdom. And when, inadvertently, she expressed views not in agreement with his, the moment he disagreed with her she yielded and changed her opinion, as if a God had spoken to her. This was not a grudging submission, nor the fruit of duty, and still less was it in a subservient spirit. Like pure water, she took the color of the sky and clouds that lay above her.

Of a sweet disposition, always inclined to do right almost without an effort, never doing enough, active beyond her strength, and neat to a degree that no description can measure, she made the Parson's home almost happier than he thought it ought to be.

"My dear Eliza, I sometimes am afraid that we have too many good things in this life. Our chastisements are so few and so light that I query whether God loves us, 'for whom he loveth he chasteneth.'"

A slight blush of pleasure would come upon her delicate cheek. Sometimes she would say:

"If our boy had lived, we should have been too happy."

That boy died at twelve years of age. The neighbors thought that he was not a saint. Therein they differed from his mother. Besides him they had no children. That grief borne, all the rest of their life seemed tranquil and prosperous.

Unconsciously and gradually her husband became her god. All that he did was right. All that he said was true. He never made mistakes. Not to like her husband was to be bad, of course. To differ with him showed weakness of character. She repeated his sayings with an infantine simplicity. She wondered that other people did not talk more about him. Dr. Wentworth was a great man, because he was warmly attached to her husband. She would not hear a word against Tommy Taft, and she took every word of his speeches to her husband as literal and sober verity.

"There must be a seed of grace in him," she would say, "or he would not be so fond of good men."

We may be sure that this did not escape Tommy's eye. He would call at the Parson's house when he was pretty sure not to be at home.

"The Doctor's not at home, you say? That's my luck! But what a blessin' to this town to have such a minister in't! Sez I to Hiram, t'other day, sez I, 'Hiram, you ought to be a better man than you be, seein' you have sech extraordinary preachin' and example.' But Hiram, you know, marm, though nowise vicious, is not given to speritual things. More's the pity! But what a privilege it must be to you, marm, to be his wife! Remarkable that sech a blessin' should be given to just one woman! Your husband don't never swear, marm, does he?"

The start of unaffected amazement with which Mrs. Buell echoed the word "swear!" seemed infinitely gratifying to Tommy, who raised and lowered his shaggy eyebrows several times, saying with each movement:

"Of course not—of course not. I knew he didn't. If any body had told me that Dr. Buell swore, I wouldn't a b'lieved it on oath. Impossible! impossible! Jest think of it—the Doctor swearin'. Oh, it's beautiful to see a man that don't swear and don't want to. But really, marm—when you see how wicked folks is—what ugly things they will do—don't you think its kind o' natural to swear? Not profane swearin', of course, but pious swearin'."

"My dear," said Mrs. Buell to her husband, "don't you think Tommy Taft is near to the kingdom? He seems to me to have much that's good in him. I can't but hope there's a work going on slowly in him."

"Yes—very slowly."

For several winters Mrs. Buell had suffered from colds. Each year her system seemed less able to resist attacks and more and more weakened by them. She was herself not aware of danger. But her husband, instructed by Dr. Wentworth, was seriously uneasy. As winter drew near, her strength seemed failing. She struggled bravely and hopefully. But each month reduced the number of hours in which she could attend to household duties. Her face grew thin, but even more beautiful every week. Her eye was never brighter. Her cheek, like an October apple, showed by its brightness that the harvest time was drawing near.

Not a word was spoken by either of them of that Great Fear, which was dimly disclosing itself to her, and which had long been defined and clearly visible to him.

During the autumn, Dr. Buell had taken his wife, on various pretexts, to ride with him far oftener than was usual. As cold weather approached, he prepared his house for winter with more care than ever before. New arrangements for heating were introduced. The windows were calked and the doors listed to prevent drafts of air. Little by little the whole economy of the household revolved around this shadowy fear, of which no one spoke. Every one acted as if a danger impended, but no one uttered a word of it. Even to Dr. Wentworth Parson Buell spoke with muffled indirections, as though to put his fears into words would give them some advantage.

This could not last. Little by little the invalid yielded one and another task, saying:

"I don't know what ails me, but I grow so weak."

In vain were tempting dishes prepared; and jellies, cordials, wines, with which parishioners filled the house, gave no strength. The white upon her countenance grew whiter, and the scarlet more intense. With a gentle reluctance, she gave up one after another of her household duties, but strove to fulfil little personal services to her husband. She looked over his linen every week, and languidly repaired any little break. She laid out for him his Sunday apparel, and saw that his clean white handkerchiefs were duly laid upon his coat. One by one, even these small but precious duties of love were taken from her, and she seemed to herself, as by some invisible power, to be drifting further and further away from him.

It was one brilliant Sabbath morning in January that she had prepared for her husband his white cravat, which for many years she had fondly placed upon his neck, and tied in a perfect bow, smoothing the ends, and by dainty touches here and there giving the look of neatness and simplicity for which Dr. Buell was noted.

On this morning the bell tolled long for the minister. The deacons looked uneasily toward the door. Such a thing as tardiness was never known in Dr. Buell. What could keep him?

Deacon Trowbridge, big with an innocent sense of the importance of the matter, looked at the pulpit, then at Deacon Marble, then into the broad aisle, and then closed his eyes for a moment and cleared his throat. He repeated this service once or twice in an edifying manner, and then slowly rose and went over to Deacon Marble to consult.

First one whispered and the other nodded, then the other whispered and the first one nodded; then both of them looked perplexed. Meanwhile the boys tittered; for while the deacons were absorbed in each other, Dr. Buell had passed down the aisle and entered the pulpit, and his voice, opening the service, put a hasty end to the two deacons' perplexity.

What had detained him?

When he came that morning for his cravat, his wife with trembling hands essayed her accustomed offices. She laid back the collar of his vest, raised his shirt collar, and sought to clasp his neck with the cravat, but her little strength was gone. Panting, and smiling sadly, she sought to cover the failure by plaiting the cravat a little differently, and again rose to place it round her husband's neck.

Her hand trembled and failed. Now, for the first time, the grief brought forth the confession:

"Oh, my husband, I shall never do it again. I am dying, and I must leave you."

Clasped in his bosom, she gave way to a paroxysm of weeping. There was silence. Tears poured down his face. With ineffable tenderness he bore her to the bed, and kneeling down by her side, he poured out his thanksgiving for all her love and service to him, in broken sentences, wet with tears, as if it were an offering of flowers wet with dew, and in solemn simplicity he gave her back to God, from whose hand he had taken her. The clouds rolled away. From that moment both of them spoke of her death with tender frankness.

When he arose in the pulpit that morning his voice did not falter There was neither weakness nor excitement; but there was an irresistible fervor. Once or twice he came so near to the expression of feeling that all the house grew still, and the ticking of the round clock on the singing-gallery could be plainly heard all over the church. It was but a moment's weakness, and his strong heart overcame the tendency, and his work went on to the end unfalteringly. Few ever forgot the strange solemnity of that morning.

Meanwhile a new energy seemed to fill the minister's soul. As he had been jealous always lest any thing should withdraw him from his work, by any self-indulgence, so now he was afraid of the self-indulgence of sorrow. He left nothing unperformed that he had been wont to do. He visited the schools with even more fidelity than hitherto, he held his neighborhood meetings, he was present at all the committees and various circles, which fill up a parish life. But the moment his tasks were done he flew back to his wife's chamber.

From her childhood his wife had been a member of the church, but, now that she was so soon to go forth from all temples made with hands, her husband's deepest anxiety was as to her full preparation for the great change. Not one word had he ever uttered to his congregation of the awful issues of the future, that he did not now feel in her behalf who so long had walked with him to the house of God. Day by day, he held up before her the searching tests by which, since the days of Jonathan Edwards, the more earnest New England Christians have tried themselves.

It would have been a great relief to his soul, if, instead of a gentle, languid submission to the will of God, she had been favored with more earnest experiences. Her views of her own sinfulness were correct, but without great strength. Her faith was mild, but not strong. She was willing to go, but did not rejoice. She could not say, for a long time, that she was willing to leave her husband. Still more trying was it that she had to confess, that she loved her husband more than any thing else. Her soul had as yet no wings, but would cling and brood in its nest.

Her husband was jealous for the honor of his Master, and sincerely mourned that his beloved clung to *him* with such utter and undivided love.

Agate Bissell, who had lived in the house ever since Mrs. Buel ceased to leave her room, though profoundly sympathizing with the minister in his religious views, yet had a sympathy with a woman's nature, which enabled her to help both of them.

"Why do you worry the poor child, doctor? She can't give you up while the Lord keeps you both together! Seems to me it will be time enough to let go of you when the Lord takes off her hand. As long as we are living God will give us living grace, and he won't give us dying grace till it's time to die. What's the use of trying to feel like dying when you ain't dying—nor anywhere near it? It seems to me that folks that are afraid of not following the Lord, might sometimes be afraid of going before him when not called."

Dr. Buell made no reply. He looked upon Agate with a thoughtful, wondering look, as if grateful for unexpected help. At length he said, as if hoping help in other points:

"I have prayed that the Lord would make to her a fuller disclosure of his glory, and that he would give her such an assurance of her acceptance, as would leave us a comforting evidence afterwards."

"You want your wife to be submissive to God's will. Are *you* submissive? Are you willing that God shall show his sovereignty by giving just such a dying experience to this poor child as he pleases? She's been all her life clasping round you, tight as a vine, and she's grown so. Now you want her to unclasp and let go, just when she's so weak and trembling that she needs more than ever she did the support of leaning on and loving you. You are in danger of oppressing one of God's little ones, by putting the burdens of the strong upon her. And as for her evidences, I don't know why a whole life of consistent piety should be thrown away, when you are groping for *feelings* in a poor, feeble, dying creature, that is too weak to manage her thoughts or feelings."

Dr. Buell was used to Agate Bissell's straight-forward sense, and now he was more than willing to take the implied rebuke contained in her words. Indeed, his solicitude, his fear of not being faithful, his anxiety that nothing should be left undone in this last great experience of life—departure from it—had somewhat disturbed that nice judgment which he manifested in ministering to others in their last sicknesses.

It was past the middle of February, and so near to March that already its searching winds were abroad, when the crisis of Mrs. Buell's disease was reached. On a Sunday morning, brilliant but blustering, Dr. Buell proceeded as usual to the church. His wife had not for a long time seemed so well. She lay propped up with pillows. Her wan and wasted face was refreshed this morning with a return of almost childlike beauty. Flowers brought by Rose Wentworth stood near. At her husband's appearance, a very sweet smile went over her face, and, as he stooped to kiss her, she whispered: "The Lord is very good. He sends me great peace to-day. Good-bye! Come back again soon, dear husband!"

It was the Angel of Peace, whose wings were already bearing her up above all storms or sorrows!

Dr. Buell was gone scarce half an hour before the sufferer groaned with pain. For a few moments she seemed in anguish. Suddenly she placed her hands on her bosom as if something had given way. The experience of pain faded out of her face—a sweet smile came. She seemed as if she was gazing at some surprising sight. Agate spake to her—spake again. It was vain! Other sounds were now about her, and her voice was heard in other realms!

Rose was sent to call Dr. Buell. He was in the closing passages of his sermon when he saw the door of the church open and Rose enter. She cast upon him a beseeching look, and then, as if hesitating, she turned and whispered to one who sat near. They both went out into the vestibule.

Though agitated, his sense of duty in God's house inspired Dr. Buell to finish the morning services in every particular. It was not meet that his private feelings should disturb the services of the sanctuary!

No sooner had he come forth than Rose met him. Without waiting for her message, he said:

"Let us hasten! Is she worse?"

"No;—better!"

"Is it so? God help me!"

Bewildered and hardly conscious of surrounding things, he entered the room where his wife lay. He gazed long upon her. Then, in a wandering way, he stretched out his arms and called her, "Eliza! Eliza!" He sat down upon the side of her bed. He placed his hands upon her face. He took her poor little hand in his. There was the wedding-ring, and no other had she ever worn! All the past seemed to come back upon him.

"Dead? Impossible!—Eliza! speak! just one word! Speak! Oh, my wife!"

Then with all the fond names which he had ever used he plead with her.

Agate and Rose withdrew—let us draw back! This first sorrow is for the soul's self only, and for God!

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE TWO SEXTONS.

"Good morning, Mr. Turfmould," said Tommy Taft. "Fine weather. Very busy you were yesterday!—a solemn day."

"Yes, Mr. Taft, a fine funeral—as fine a funeral as ever I see. Such lessons must have an effect on the careless and worldly."

"You must be a judge of sech matters, by this time, Turfmould!"

"I've been in my business nigh about thirty years. I've done most of the respectable buryin' hereabouts, and though I say it that shouldn't say it, I've as good judgment about a funeral as the next man!"

"I thought the hull country had turned out. I never saw so many folks in that church. There must have been fifty carriages."

"Fifty? nearer a hundred! Then there was six ministers from out of town, besides all that lives here. Gener'ly a funeral in the week time is like a shadow in one spot. But yesterday it was a cloudy day all over town. Indeed, it was just like Sunday."

"Only a good deal more so."

"Yes—a good deal more so. It was certainly edifyin'."

"Ah!" said Tommy Taft, with a look of great simplicity, "the ministers were all very well, but folks couldn't keep their eyes off from you and that beautiful coffin."

"A better coffin was never brought into town. Poor thing! I knew her taste. She was awful neat. The last thing afore they put the linin' in I went myself and stood the coffin on end, and brushed it out, every crack and corner, just as she would have done herself, poor sufferin' creature, if she had been there. But she was a kind thing—very good to folks in distress, and I felt like suitin' her if I could. I just said to myself, 'Turfmould, this is the last time you can pay her back any thing for all she did for your child, poor thing!'

"I tell yer, Mr. Taft, I never quite liked the way that funeral was served on my child! Tompkins hasn t got the feelin's that our profession requires. Do you s'pose I would take advantage of *him*, if he'd had a body in his house, and one of his own bodies, too, a child, or a wife, or somethin' like that? That's no time to run a fellow, when he's doin' his own mournin'. Nobody loves his child any better'n I did mine. And there wasn't a puttier girl in this town, that was allowed on all hands. Yes, sir. They used to call her the lily of the grave-yard—they did. That was a delicate allusion to my bizness, you know. I hadn't expected that she'd drop off. When I got back from Squire Cheney's funeral, and was puttin' up my hoss, Pete he came out, and looked at me a kind of wet and wild-like, and so I run past him, and went in. Oh, dear me! I don't like to tell about it. My wife she didn't say any thing, and I didn't say any thing, and Rhoda didn't say any thing. She lay on the bed, and her hair hung down on the pillow, and her face was white—and her mother never cried, and couldn't; she didn't look at me, nor at the poor child, neither, and didn't stir; and I never saw two folks look so much alike as they two did; and both of 'em, you know, was called Rhoda! I never was in such a peck of troubles. I thought I'd go for the minister, and then I thought of Dr. Wentworth, and just then, who should open the door but the Doctor's Rose? She'd been comin' every day, and fetchin' things, and she loved Rhoda dearly. The child just worshipped Rose. Well, she came in and had some flowers, and she walked straight up to the bed, and said, 'Rhoda, Rhoda,' and then she sort o' came to the meanin' of things; and she looked with her great blue eyes at the poor dead thing, with such a lovin' way, that I ra'ly thought the child's face was gittin' brighter; and once I thought she was comin' to; her face trembled like; but it was just my eyesight,—you know when tears are movin' round you can't see very correct."

At this he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand; and drawing a large red handkerchief from his pocket, he gave a sonorous blowing, sounding, as Tommy Taft said, like the rams' horns around Jericho.

"Well, I was sittin' on the foot of the bed, tryin' to git over it, when the door opened agin, and Rhoda's mother came in—that is my wife's mother, you know—and walked right up to the mother. . And afore she had time to say a word, Rhoda she riz right up, and gave such a scream as never was heard afore, I do believe. It cum from the very heart. Oh, Lord, how it hurt me! 'Rhody, Rhody,' sez I, 'don't for pity sakes!' But I didn't need to say so, for that's the last time she ever opened her mouth. I don't wonder. There was a year's feelin' in that one scream, and it killed her. She sort o' fell in her mother's arms, and Rose and she got her on the bed, and she lay sleepin' like through the night, and in the mornin' when the sun rose she was gone, and nobody knew when she breathed her last. And then I had two bodies in the house at a time. Providence don't often provide such materials for a funeral. Well, I found it putty hard. Rose, she sent for Alice Cathcart, and they wouldn't let any body touch her but themselves; and Rose, she put flowers 'round her, and said she was the sweetest flower of 'em all; and Rose kept smilin' and cryin' softly all the time,—and was as gentle, and lovin', and careful of me as if I'd been her father; and she cum to me when I sat in the door, next day, feelin' as if I was dead inside and couldn't feel, only my head it went on thinkin',—she cum and read the Bible to me. At first I couldn't hear much, only her voice was sweet and comfortin'; but as she went on, I seemed to cum to myself just as she was readin', '*And Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. And he took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them and blessed them.*' It seemed as if I heard somebody say this in the air; and I felt as if I knew what had become of Rhody, and her mother, too—for she warn't more'n a child herself—and I bust into tears, and didn't feel as bad agin through the hull of it. Well, at first I thought I should send down to Springfield for a funeral. Tompkins hadn't done the right thing by me, and though we never had any words, we'd had more'n enough feelin's. He had a smooth way of edgin' into my custom. When young Brace was buried, every body said, I ought to have had it.

"And then he hadn't no family of his own, and there wasn't no chance for me some time, in like circumstances, you know. Well, this is the way I got out of it: I'd been sittin' still after Rose left off readin', and I heard somebody talkin' in the room where Rhody was—both of 'em—and I went to the door, and there was Rose and Alice kneelin' down by the pillow, and Rose was prayin'. Such a sweet prayer I never did hear. It beat the minister all to nothin', and it was full of thanks, and as happy as a Spring bird is when he sets in the apple trees yonder and sings, and when she stopped I went back and sot down, and all my feelin's was changed and I said: 'Git thee behind me, Satan. Tompkins *shall* have this funeral;' and so he did. I'll say this for him, that I believe he tried to do about right. But nature is strong, you know, and I *did* think he took on a leetle more than he need to. Mebby, if it had been me, I should have done so too. It makes a difference, you know, whose house a funeral's in. And when we was all in the carriages, and the two coffins was in the hearse,—he wanted two hearses, but that would not be in good taste. I didn't like so much show, and besides, I knew the mother ought to keep her child close to her;—and when the procession was ready, he came walkin' up to see, for the last time, if all was right, it wa'n't in human nature to keep in his satisfaction with the occasion! And when he mounted and sat down with the driver on the leadin' carriage, I do believe there wasn't so proud a man in this town.

"Well, he was very kind though, and we've never had any words since then; and, considerin' the temptations of the business, we are pretty good friends; and so I thought it fair, when the minister's wife was goin' to be buried, to show him some attention, so I asked him to officiate with me. Every body knew that it was *my* funeral, and it looked right to let folks see that there wasn't no jealousy. I think such a great loss ought to produce a solemnizing effect on every body, particularly the young. I always try to make my funerals means of grace to somebody. Every body's got to die. Nobody dies but once, though, and any good you're goin' to git out of 'em you must git then. So I thought I ought to to ask Dr. Buell if he had any thing specially improvin' to suggest. But he turned as pale as ashes when he saw me, and shuddered all over as if he had a chill comin' on, and Agate Bissell, she said, in a hurry like, as she pushed me out, that he wa'n't in a state of mind to see me.

"But I went over to Tompkins, and he and I consulted about it.

"'Tompkins,' says I, 'this is a peculiar occasion.'

"'Yes,' says he, 'it is. It's enough to make one's reputation.'

"'Now I want,' says I, 'to have just such a funeral as would suit her, so that if she could come back, she'd say, "I thank you, Mr. Turfmould; you have done exactly to my mind." You know that if there was a woman in this town who hated dirt, she's that woman, and I think we're bound to respect her taste when she's gone just as much as if she's livin'.'

"'Well, that's easy enough,' said Tompkins. 'We can slick up every thing with extra care, and have a double inspection of all the materials——'

"'Well, that of course; but I was thinkin' about the grave. You know you can't dig a grave and have no dirt. Deceive ourselves as we will, you know we've all got to come to it,—dust we are and to dust we return; but then, you know, we can break the matter gently like, keep a large tarpaulin lyin' over the dirt, and then I mean to cover the outside box with *turf*, which keeps the gravel and stuff from rattlin' in when the coffin is down.'

"'That's a good idea,' sez he, 'and I think all your arrangements are good. They are new, and ought to be fashionable.'

"'I don't care for fashion,' says I. 'I think it will be comfortin' to the minister and respectful to her memory. I've seen things managed quite the contrary. You know when Bidwell's wife died, they put him in the coach with his sister-in-law, and they had always quarrelled, and they didn't mend matters that journey. Old Bidwell told me of it. Says he, 'If I ever have another funeral you shall have it, Turfmould. Jones is no sort of a manager. He just spoilt my wife's whole funeral. I never took a bit of comfort in it from beginning to end.'

"'But Dr. Buell had no reason to say that,' says Tompkins. 'I am sure we did every thing that we could. I think Kyle beat himself with those flowers. I never saw such splendid funeral flowers. I didn't know what flowers was made for till I saw wreaths, and crosses, and dishes. Flowers is certainly very useful, and, if well managed, considerable profit may come from them.'"

For some reason Tommy Taft seemed to enjoy this exhibition of professional feeling with the utmost inward satisfaction. He let the sexton go on uninterrupted, except a word here and there to set him forward again.

"Well, Mr. Turfmould," said Tommy, at length, "it's a serious loss to the town, but that's nothin' to what 'tis to Dr. Buell. I really pity him. There's no mistake the minister feels it. He acts as though he'd lost somethin', and didn't exactly know where to look for it."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FRUIT OF SORROW.

Nothing strikes all value out of the ordinary affairs of life so soon as sorrow. It works alike in all, but the deepest natures are the most affected by it. A single blow descends, and the world is changed, and rises before the eye as another creation. Yesterday the soul surveyed its garden, to-morrow it will see only a wilderness.

Sorrows work upon the soul as late rains do upon vegetation. All night a cold rain falls, and in the morning the leaves are gone. The coverts are no longer shady, trees hold up bare branches, and the air with every puff of wind is filled with leaves, languidly descending to the ground. After the first shock and excitement of grief, which sometimes carries the soul high up toward serene experiences, comes the reaction. The nerve of pleasure is paralyzed. All objects report themselves to the senses in sombre colors. Values are changed or destroyed. Life is empty and effort useless. In thoughtful natures next arise anxious questionings. The breaking up of the heart seems, for a time, to overturn the conclusions of the reason itself. Men doubt their most settled beliefs, and bold skepticisms invade the secret calm of Faith. While the nobler sentiments are silent and torpid, there spring up in their place sudden repulsions and capricious disgusts.

The valley and shadow of Death is not dreadful to those who pass *through* it, but to those who follow after but may *not* pass through!

Dr. Buell, whose simplicity was childlike, felt himself strangely tempted. Such terrible thoughts never before assaulted him. For a refuge he sought his study, that there in pious meditations and devotions he might combat the adversary.

But, after a little, he fled out of it as from a furnace. Such horrible doubts assailed him—such wicked feelings coursed through his heart, that he almost believed himself given over of God. His very struggles increased his difficulty. They heightened the excitement, and carried him further from rest and nearer to a morbid condition. His discourses on the first Sunday after the burial of his wife were even more impressive than usual, and his flock admired the faith which lifted him above such sorrow. On the second Sunday a marked change was visible. His sermon, like his own soul, was irregular and unbalanced. The quick eye of Dr. Wentworth discerned the minister's condition. Now it was that friendship could make itself felt. He affected to have much need of the minister. He carried him to-day in one direction to counsel a dying person, to-morrow he consulted him respecting some orphan children. It was necessary, too, it seemed, that he should go with Dr. Wentworth to a school district lying remote from the village. During these rides, which were every day varied, he gently drew from the minister an account of his experiences, and prescribed so skilfully for both his moral and his physical need that months of suffering, and perhaps the usefulness of his life, were saved.

"Nothing exhausts vitality faster than the exertion of the will," said Dr. Wentworth. "Already the tone of your nerves is lost. You are still further reducing yourself by attempting to restrain and combat irregular and morbid action by simple will-power. The disease and the remedy are both of them exhausting you. Let yourself alone. Avoid solitude. Turn to the help of others. Take on business which will occupy without tasking your mind. Nothing is half so medicinal for our troubles as benevolent sympathy and occupation in the troubles of others. This is the true moral recreation."

"But is it right, doctor, that one should seek relief from trouble sent of God, except by going to the hand that has afflicted?"

"He seeks God who accepts His laws," said the doctor. "The best preparation for personal communion is a devout fulfilment of the duties owed to God through natural laws. He who asks God's help should at least show respect to his laws, and not make prayer merely a petition for the suspension of the penalties of the violated laws of mind."

Dr. Wentworth's efforts availed so far as to rescue the minister from the danger of breaking down in health. Little by little his spirits rose. Yet life seemed changed and emptied. He turned all his powers into his ministerial work. A new fervor filled his preaching. His appeals became more tender and solemn. It was noticed that gradually the audience was filling up. Men listened with more earnestness. Week after week the community were moving together in one direction, under the influence of the profoundest sentiments which can inspire the human soul.

Judge Bacon was sitting in Dr. Wentworth's library, one Sunday evening, and seemed unusually talkative. Yet, there was an emphasis and point not ordinarily observed in his half-negligent and polished manner.

"The parson has a grand *battue* on hand."

"Ah? I don't understand."

"Why he has for several weeks past been sweeping around the people with his grand doctrines; and now the circle is formed, and he is driving in toward the centre. Oh, you'll see see rare slaying before long."

Dr. Wentworth made no answer, but sat as one who is meditating.

"You can see," said Judge Bacon, "every Sunday he advances a step. I've seen this thing before. I know how it will end. By and by there will come a break down; then, like frightened sheep, a crowd will make a rush toward the church-doors, pell-mell. After a while, a count will be made, and the results published. The upshot of it will be that, while before, one hundred selfish, bustling, disagreeable people lived outside of the church, afterwards they will live inside of the church—that's all."

Still Dr. Wentworth made no reply. At length Judge Bacon said abruptly:

"Doctor, do you believe in Revivals?"

"Certainly."

"You surprise me! I had supposed that you were too firm and intelligent a believer in Natural Law."

"It is on that ground that I believe in Revivals. In every department of life men are moved in masses, and, as it were, with social contagions. Few men in any thing act alone. They kindle themselves in the simplest employments by social contact. Social enthusiasms have characterized the progress of the race in every department of society."

"Because societies have been rude," said Judge Bacon, "and men have been animal in nature, and it is no wonder that their animal feelings should be excited."

"On the contrary," replied the doctor "animals are not sub ject to social enthusiasms, or only in the most rudimentary manner Men are susceptible of such excitement in proportion as they recede from animal conditions. In art, in amusements, in social improvement, in patriotism, men tend to act in masses, to be kindled by each other to enthusiasm, and such conditions develop, not obstruct, the active powers. This social excitement is favorable to taste, affection, judgment, and reason. I do not know why moral emotions should be exempt from this same law."

"But you can plainly see that these things are got up. I can give you a prescription for a revival."

"Why not?" replied Dr. Wentworth. "Is not education 'got up?' Is not art culture 'got up?' Is not your own profession, and mine, 'got up?' Why should men be afraid to speak of moral states as the result of deliberate and intentional effort? Why should not men apply the term education to moral faculties as well as to others? and study for moral results as they do for social or æsthetic? Are not the moral sentiments subject to laws as much as any other parts of the mind?"

"Yes—but church people imagine that revivals descend upon them from above; that they are mysterious and divine; that the less human agency is concerned in them the purer they will be."

"It is only another instance," said the doctor, "in which a fact is recognized before the theory of its causation is understood. I do not the less believe that a divine influence is experienced because it pursues the channels of established law. Men account for phenomena by natural laws, as far as their knowledge goes, and then they ascribe whatever is left over, beyond their knowledge of causation, to superior beings. The higher ranges of human experience are the most complex and subtle, and seem mysterious, because the lines of causation are finer and more spiritual. But the profoundest mysteries of human experience will one day be found to furnish the most admirable illustrations of the universality and constancy of natural laws."

"I don't see, Doctor, but you are as bad as the rest of them. I shall have to be a philosopher without company. It will never do for us to submit to this influence. An enthusiasm, in my mind, would mix up things worse than a wind in my study would dishevel my papers. I shall stand aloof and see others act."

The doctor continued:

"All nations, pretending to moral life, have been subject to these outbursts of feeling. It is all very well to declare that a gradual and constant progress in goodness would be better. Such is not the law of development. Nations advance by paroxysms. The race has gone up not by steady improvement, but by leaps, with long rests between. At a later period, when society has reached a higher plane than at present, progress may become even, uniform, and constant. At present that seems impossible. And we are to regard these moral freshets as admirable, relatively to the wants of the whole community."

Here the discussion ended, for that time.

We have little idea of the power of truths till we see their action, without obstruction, upon a whole community that is aroused to a sensitive and sympathetic condition. Truths ordinarily run through societies as gold does in rocks—a thin vein shut in by wide measures of stones. When enough men hold a truth in common to give to that truth a social influence, its range and power become greatly increased; but no one knows the very royalty of a truth until the whole community are aroused, made sensitive and sympathetic, and give to it the force of glowing enthusiasm. Not only is the power of a truth thus disclosed, but a community is knit together and enriched by being made subject to some one worthy impulse all together, by consciously holding some great idea with a common enthusiasm. And if the truth is a profound moral truth, and the enthusiasm a moral enthusiasm, no man can measure the cleansing, inspiring, and strengthening influence arising from such a unity and intensity of experience as it produces.

The indirect effects of those moral experiences called revivals, in vivifying the moral sense, elevating the sentiments, and giving to daily life a larger moral element—in bringing over secular things the shadow of the Infinite, are so important that they should be accounted great benefits, quite independently of the special personal reformations which they work.

This religious movement, which was itself remotely connected with Dr. Buell's bereavement, was one of the occurrences which we alluded to in the last chapter as having an important influence upon Barton's life. It brought to a head a long train of moral symptoms.

With his mental organization, and with the domestic influences which had from his childhood been acting upon him, Barton Cathcart could hardly fail to be of a religious turn. But in New England, pre-eminently, the religious dispositions and affections are required to be conjoined with the great philosophical statements of religious truths. It is not enough that one is good, he must be sound. There is a practical toleration toward those whose lack of education or feebleness of mind gives no power of reasoning upon such themes as are involved in the great doctrines of revealed religion. But in proportion as men are educated is the demand intensified that right affections shall proceed from right beliefs.

Young Cathcart, during the last two years of his college course, had found his religious life passing from a state of acquiescent acceptance into one of eager questioning. His Reason was asserting its sovereignty. Should he believe because his parents and teachers did? Should he suffer himself, among so many sects, holding widely different beliefs, to be located without any deliberate investigation or honest judgment of his own? Was a man to be superscribed by his parents, like a letter, and sent to this or that church?

To this rebound of reason from youthful faith was added the influence of scientific studies, to which his taste had strongly inclined him. But the result was far other than he had anticipated. He proposed to himself to open, investigate and settle, one by one, the great truths of religion. He but half succeeded. He opened but could not close. He had power to bring into doubt every one of his childhood beliefs, but he had neither the experience nor the grasp required to conduct them back to certainty.

He began to feel that convictions did not follow logic. The feelings must be consulted, and the imagination as well as the reason, in re-establishing faith.

At one time he would drift far away from all positive belief. All the more familiar truths seemed paralyzed. As men look back upon nations in the olden time, and know that amid their fondest convictions they were in profound error—that their gods were myths, their histories half fables, and their theology a mere fiction, so now and then it came home to him with ghastly distinctness, that a time would come when men would look back upon him and his generation in the same manner.

From these dreary solitudes, Barton would rebound, after a time into an enthusiastic re-acceptance of all his childhood faith. He was enraged at himself and at his intellect for robbing him of peace.

It was like him to carry on these conflicts within himself silently, and without help from others. Thus for two or three years his soul rose and fell like the tides. He was swept far out into the solitudes of the sea, where sometimes silent mists, and sometimes mighty storms befell him. Then, with inexpressible relief, the current changed, and he swept shoreward, and flowed in again to familiar bays and rivers, and rejoiced in the old places.

This could not continue always. The painfulness of this dreary uncertainty at length had become so great that he relinquished all thought of religious themes, in so far as he could, and assisted himself in his efforts by excessive application to study. During the first year after he graduated, he had contrived to smother his difficulties, and to maintain a peace which he hoped would become permanent.

In this state of mind when a deep religious movement began in Norwood, he found that his troubles were only covered up, not extinguished.

His mother's solicitude that he should rise into an open and earnest religious life was extreme. She ventured but a few words, but they were like arrows. Dr. Wentworth and his family left Barton to follow his own bent without seeking to force it. Dr Buell, kindly but firmly, pressed him with considerations of duty. Barton shrank from disclosing his real state. If he had reached any settled convictions he would have had courage to avow and defend them; but to say that the religion of his childhood had let go and dropped away from him, and that he held in doubt all that those most dear to him held in a blessed certainty, was to make himself the victim of feelings worse than pity. He lived in a community where to be an unbeliever was to be a criminal.

A new misery befell him. The consciousness of a secret life utterly at discord with his seeming life, and with that of those dearest to him, began to raise in him the fear that he was practising insincerity;—that he was living a false and double life. He abhorred duplicity. He loved truth and frankness. And yet, in matters of the most vital moment, he was living a life utterly different from that which all that knew him supposed. At times his distress grew so great that he was on the point of disclosing his feelings. But to whom? Not to his mother. That would pierce her without relieving him. Not to Rose. He shuddered at the thought. It would be like letting night down upon his already faint hopes. Should it be to Dr. Buell? But the doctor, he thought, had never doubted as he had, and could, therefore, have no sympathy with one upon whom an argument and a text produced little salutary effect. The question was soon answered for him.

"I have called," said Parson Buell to Dr. Wentworth, "to speak with you concerning our common friend, Barton Cathcart. I have talked with him several times on the great subject on which so many are interested. But I obtained no response. It was plain to me that his thoughts were disturbed, and from certain signs I am led to fear that his views are unsettled. I am distressed to think that this season may pass and leave no blessing for him. We cannot endure to see a nature so noble made a cast-away. Perhaps it will be in your power to aid, at least to ascertain his true state. The spring is passing. Summer will soon be here. He is a child of faith and of many prayers. I am aware of his partiality for you, and of the great influence which your mind has over him. It may be that he will repose in you a confidence which he seems indisposed to place in me."

The doctor promised to give to Barton an early opportunity of conversation, should he wish it. But it came even before he sought it. Rose on the next morning told her father that Barton had been questioning her on many points of religious belief, and had expressed a wish to converse with her father.

That very evening Dr. Wentworth and Barton were long together. The result only of their conversation did the doctor deem it best to report to Dr. Buell.

"I think Barton has stumbled at the letter, but has not fallen from the spirit of the Record. Unskilful handling of his own case has made him morbid. He desires the truth as an unweaned child yearns for its mother's breast. It ought not to be difficult for such a one to find firm faith. His is a clear instance of that doubt which has widely sprung up in the track of physical science. It arises from the introduction of a totally new *method* of investigation. It must be met on its own ground. If the distinguishing doctrines of grace have their types and root in nature, as I believe they have, then evidence from that source will reach the trouble. The alphabetic forms of moral truth found at large in the world will serve to teach one at length how to read those clearer manifestations of the divine nature, and of moral government, which are perfectly disclosed only in the life and teachings of our Saviour."

But we prefer to let Barton Cathcart speak for himself. From a private journal we extract a few passages.

BARTON CATHCART'S JOURNAL.

"*June* 10.—To-day has been full of excitement. I have seen Rose. Why do I seek to unsettle her peace? Should I love her, if her soul wandered as mine does? Am I not drawn to her by her deep peace, by that very faith that does not falter? And yet I am provoked that she is tranquil and I am not. Why should she have all the gifts of God and I none? Every thing with her tends to fulness of peace, and to gayety and joy. But I am heavily laden. Thought only mires me deeper. I cannot get my consent to relinquish it. It follows me—haunts me. I cannot accept the religion of my fathers. I cannot get rid of it. I am vibrating between faith and skepticism. I envy little children. I would give all the world if I could go back to be like them—to have their unfaltering trust in truth. I am giddy and whirled and very unhappy.

"Dr. Wentworth told me yesterday that my trouble was that I was living in my own personality; that I was too low down to see the truth; that I should never *reason* my way through; that moral truth could not be perceived by pure reason; that it must have an emotive inspiration, and come first as an experience, and afterward, if at all, as an analysis and deduction; that I must grow tired and despair of engineering my way by mere reason; that when I came into a state of moral exaltation, I should see truth and its harmony; even then that it would not be *expressible;* that a moral view that satisfied a full nature could not be reduced to terms of language. I have had several conversations with him. He, if any one, can help me. But how to come to that exaltation? Am I to believe what I don' believe, in the hope that it will kindle my moral feelings to luminousness? Am I to stultify my reason first, in order to educate it?

"Yet, the doctor knows the courses of scientific thought, he certainly has kept pace with the knowledge of skeptical schools, and yet he is a Christian believer. He seems to carry nature and Christianity in harmony. He is certainly at rest. That I do know. I have too sure an instinct not to know who are doubting. My sore heart is so sensitive that I feel, almost before I hear one speak, what he will say. I am repelled from those who are at rest in unbelief. Judge Bacon chills me. I rebound from Wentworth, because he believes, and from Bacon because he does not His cold touch shocks me. I feel when he talks about religion as I should if my mother were dead, and I saw a surgeon using her body for anatomical demonstrations. All my life is woven into Christian faith; to rid myself of it is to tear every thread that connects me with the past, with childhood, with home, with taste, with love, with knowledge itself. What is a thread worth drawn out of the fabric? That is a man separated from the influences and beliefs that formed him, and that are woven into society. Dr. Buell warned me against becoming fascinated with specious unbelief, said that the pride of my heart would deceive me and flatter me to my ruin. Great God! what is there attractive in not believing? It is living torture. I am like a man who, walking unconsciously, has slipped into a dry well, whose sides defy climbing. I am alone, men walk a hundred feet above me—perhaps near me—no one hears, no one extricates. I look up and see the sky, only to measure how deep my grave is and how hopeless of ascent! I am alone there—I am without food or water or companionship, at the bottom of a well, looking up in despair of ever again feeling benign influences! Fascinations of skepticism! They are to me the fascinations of the torture-room, they are as attractive as nightmares in a fever!!

"To all the rest, is this secret horror, that I am separated by my miserable state from Rose. She could never love me, could she see what a soul I bear. I would not deceive her if I could Could a man of honor, if he was diseased, be so foolish as to hide it from a woman whom he honored—knowing that he would secure her hatred when she discovered it? But how much more is a soul and mind in disorder than a body? I dare not love Rose and lose her. I do love her, and despair of ever coming nearer to her. She would not love me, I know, if she knew me. I would not be united to her if she, in her divine kindness, would! What, marry a mere nurse! a soul nurse! Marry for my own sake, and not for hers Bring her no peace? no joy? no larger life than she had before? I wish that I could worship God as easily as I can Rose.

"*June* 15.—My school, at any rate, is helped by my inward disquiet. I seek relief in labor and thought. I fly from those sad and dreary moods, introverted and self-conscious. They ruin me and would poison every one should I infect them. I watch my scholars to see if they know that I am swinging like an unlighted star in a great circuit of darkness, eternal motion, without light or rest. I shrink from them as if I were false to my place, and had no business with children. Oh! those dear faces, turned up to me with such clear trust, I look upon them with unutterable feelings. God! suffer not contagion to go from me! I redouble my energy. I seek to fire them with ardor and honor. I seek to so burden myself with duties toward them that I shall have no room for suffering myself.

"They certainly answer to my exertion. All the nobler natures are inspired by me with almost romantic zeal. I see by their eyes admiration and fondness; but it falls upon me as the ardor of worshippers once fell on marble gods. I am cold to it. I have that sense of unmanly suffering, of soul disquiet, of utter ruin.

"*June* 20.—A strange experience befell me yesterday. My day's work was done. My walk was completed. The sun had gone down. I had fallen into one of those balanced states of mind in which is calm, and all the evening scenes tended to soften even to tenderness. A robin flew into the trees over against my room, and began that peculiar song which indicates the absence of its mate. It is the sweetest and most passionate of all their singing. And since I have learned that it is a call of loneliness for company, of love *for* love, it seems to me very exquisite, though very sad. I sat in the window till the light had faded, the song growing more and more restless and almost expostulatory. Soon the bird flew and I heard it again further off; and, after a little, it seemed to have flown yet further, and its now waning notes died out in distance. My soul was strangely affected. I almost ceased to be conscious of my body. Stealing up from the east, the moon threw a light on the valley, upon the tops and edges of the village trees. There lay

Holyoke and its silent fellows brooding in sombre silence. I was inexpressibly sad. I seemed alone, helpless, unhappy. I involuntarily called out, '*My God*, why hast thou forsaken me?' What followed I can account for only as a phantasy. Or *was* it real? *Is* there still an inspiration? I did not *think*. It was *seeing* rather! The whole heaven seemed full of ineffable gentleness. It seemed as if I was caught up into it, and felt borne in upon me a sense of God's care for me—his love, his wisdom in guiding me. A wonderful conviction seemed to flow in on me that I should surely be brought out of my darkness, and that all this trouble of soul was like the trouble which a seed feels when yet under ground—dying that it may sprout and live. Then, all unbidden, there sprung up in me such a desire to praise God as I had never felt before or imagined. For the first time in my life I had a conception of *infinite* love. I had heard the words before. Now I had a sense of the thing itself. All my soul seemed urgent to utter itself and I could not speak a word! The psalms rushed before me in which trees, mountains, sun, moon, stars, all nature, were called upon to join in praising God. But how strangely different in effect! Before, I had read them as one hears Handel's Messiah, in fragments, on a piano. Now it was as I imagine the Messiah to have been when thousands of singers and instruments gave it forth in all its grandeur at Westminster Abbey. Every thing within me became heroic. I could have yielded my life with ineffable joy to please God. All complaining seemed to me like dust which one kicks with the feet. I was absorbed and almost identified with this Universal Presence. And now, as I remember it, the strangest part of the experience, though at the time it did not strike me as such, was the nourishing pity with which I looked upon myself. I seemed to comfort myself, as if my higher self was consoling a lower self. I felt a true and ineffable pity and sorrow for myself, for my doubts and yearnings, for my longing ambitions and unsatisfied strivings; and it seemed to be borne in upon me, in a way such as no words could have done it, that all my faculties, tendencies, aspirations, had their natural and perfect fulfilment in God, and not in attaining any thing in myself. I remember a sort of figure that seemed to develop in my mind, showing me that flowers never blossomed inwardly, into themselves, but outwardly, into the light, and that all the beauty they had, either of form or color, was what they borrowed from the light which they received and reflected, and so a soul, it seemed to me, was never happy or beautiful except when it was unfolding into God.

"How long my trance lasted I cannot say. I threw myself upon the bed without undressing. A tide of tranquil delight gently flowed through my soul. I asked myself whether, were it God's will, I could yield up all my prospects in life. The mere thought of pleasing God seemed rapturous. I repeated 'Thy will be done,' and the effect was wonderful. I had a vision—shall I call it—of the divine beauty, and of a realm which was glorified by its shining light, and all my desires, personal and secular, shrunk and faded. In that exceeding light and beauty I seemed to myself unutterably insignificant. The course of my thoughts, the nature of my feelings, the ambitions and pursuits of my life, seemed under a shadow—stained, and poor, and degrading. I never imagined before what it meant to be a man, nor how far I had been from it. In those blissful moments I tested my feelings for Rose. If any thing in my life had before seemed to me pure and noble, it was my hidden love for that noble creature. But I was amazed to perceive how, in the light of His countenance, the very fragrance and blossom of my heart seemed rank and coarse. My whole life withered, and my virtues dropped like blackened leaves. And yet this unbeauty, this moral poverty, brought joy. Right over against me rose to a stately height the conception of a Being whose very nature it was, spontaneously and with deep yearning, to love and embrace such unworth. I remember thinking—for I then *thought*, as one *sees*, vast ranges of truth and ideas flying at once before me, almost without succession in time—that love of God came to me as I had seen the sun pour and flame, in the Spring, upon a brown and frozen knoll, and pierce it, and thaw it, and warm it, and nourish in it the hidden roots, and day by day bring them out in beauty. So it seemed that God's nature fell upon mine. How long this lasted I cannot tell. When I awoke in the morning I seemed like one who had missed his latitude. I went asleep in summer and awaked in winter. I ran to the window and saw all things as I had been wont to see them. Birds were singing—men and boys walking—wagons rolling—the smoke rising pale against the sky, hardly crooked by a breath of wind. The vision had been caught up. In its place was the great working world. I never was so sad to be awake. I longed for something lost. Yet I am wonderfully quieted. I do know that there is *a realm of truth.* I cannot well be made to believe that there was nothing divine in this exaltation and spiritual insight. It is an expressible relief to feel a *certainty* that nature has a Master. Now I will seek Wentworth again, and see what he means when he says that the Bible interprets nature, and that nature nourishes the truths of the Bible, and that they are parts of one development, and in harmony.

"*July* 1.—The town is filling with strangers; also come back acquaintances. Young Frank Esel has come, and is of course much at W.'s. Exceeding good company. His genial gayety refreshes me. We have much in common. I don't think that Rose *can* flirt. Yet she is a woman, and is pleased with attention, and seems fond of Esel. They are much together. They work together, drawing and painting in the open air, and holding large discourse.

"There comes, too, this summer, one Heywood, from Virginia. I am told that he is highly accomplished, and I perceive that he is elegant. I met him once or twice, and am drawn to him, as he seems to be towards me. He has been bred to the Law, and is now studying, nominally, with Judge Bacon. He wonders that I do not study law. I am every day more inclined to do it. Heywood does not intend practising Law. He tells me that his tastes lead him in the direction of Political Economy, to which in reality he devotes most of the time which is supposed to be spent in the Law.

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"*August* 1.—Something has happened I am sure. Frank Esel seems much disturbed. Rose is even more kind to him than before. But I think it is sisterly. He still visits much at the doctor's. But he is less buoyant. A dash of sadness. I find him looking fixedly at me, as if studying my innermost thought. Poor soul! I shall not be in his way. He leaves for home soon.

"I learn that Heywood is to be heir of the Chandler property, and that he is to reside here. He has property in the South, and if he inherits the Chandler estate he will be one of the wealthiest men in these parts. Chandler is said to be worth half a million. Chandler's wife and Heywood's mother are sisters, so that there is relationship between them. He lives with them now. I covet his royal ease in society. He is charming even to men, and I do not wonder that ladies welcome his attentions. He has a high bearing without haughtiness, and he is truly considerate of every one, and kind to overflowing. If all Southerners are such as he, I am henceforth in love with them. Such as I have met, however, have been different."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TOM HEYWOOD.

The most noisy and ostentatious influences of summer are not those which chiefly shape its destiny. It is the sum of small and even inconspicuous things, acting in gentle continuity, that give tone and character to the year. Frosts, that in summer become dews; dews, that in winter are transformed to frosts; tiny mosses and silken grasses; the up-sucking of moisture by hidden and silent roots; the fall of outworn leaves, and their conversion to mould; the silent power of remote orbs, that sheet the earth with light, pierce it with heat, that move the tides, and swing the globe itself around its circuit—these undemonstrative and modest influences—silent, precious, invisible attractions—are the great workers of Nature.

Nor is the analogy wanting in the soul of man. The influential agents which determine destiny are often so soft and subtle that the very touch is not felt, nor the presence discovered, of things which change or fix the mind's moods, and, with constant recurrence, fashion the character.

The unexpressed thoughts of Barton Cathcart, the rising and falling doubts, that shifted and changed like the sky-fleece of a summer day, were wearing channels in his soul, and threatening to undermine his life.

Nor could he tell what, at length, arrested the morbid tendency, or what, gradually and gently acting, began to give hope and health to his moral nature. Certain it was that, from the period recorded in his journal, the disintegrating tendency of his mind was checked, and a constructive tendency was established. The fascinations of self-torment seemed to have spent themselves. It is true that the progress toward health was imperceptible at any single point. But the morbid symptoms had been checked, and a curative tendency had been established.

Even more than ever before, he became a frequent visitor at Dr Wentworth's. Much he talked with the doctor, and much with Rose; but never respecting himself. It was his wont to converse of some principle or process, or of some imagined case, although the subject matter was in reality his own experience.

This thin veil did not deceive his friends, but served to save his delicacy, and secured a frankness and liberty which would have been otherwise impossible to one so sensitive.

Rose, peculiarly sagacious in penetrating character, discerned, in a certain general way, and appreciated Barton's state of mind Nor was she insensible to the attractions arising from the very troubles of so noble a nature.

The suffering of a great nature, if borne silently and uncomplainingly, is irresistibly affecting. In Barton there was the greatest energy and the greatest helplessness, the strength of a vigorous manhood and infantine weakness. To common eyes his lot seemed eminently fortunate. He was the envied man of the village. Every one predicted the most auspicious future. But Rose knew that all the outward portion was hollowed out and made empty by the disquiet of his mind.

When Cathcart met Rose in the presence of otners, he joined in the common conversation or in the amusements with a gayety that rendered his presence charming. But no sooner were they thrown together alone than at once he began speaking of deeper themes, and in a tone of earnest, and, at times, almost anguishful enthusiasm. She could not but perceive that to her he brought the treasure of his inmost, deepest nature. Nor could Rose hide from herself the fascination of such an intercourse. It was a mute appeal for help. This unconscious and artless flattery was exquisite. A woman's pity often opens the door to love.

But equally strong is the need of looking up, of worshipping. If a woman must lean, she needs strength to lean upon; if she must look up, then there must be some one higher than she; if she reveres, there must be to her imagination something of divinity to call for a worship. All women marry gods, but sadly consent afterwards to live with men. The quenching of their resplendent imaginations, the discovery and full conviction that the husband cannot, by his strength and goodness, dominate the heart and be sovereign in love, at length produce a great crisis. Some easily yield up the delusion, call it romance, and consent to live a life of feeble and fitful love, which has in it no worship, and much contempt. Others there are, of diviner mould, who cannot lose faith in Love, though they sadly admit that they have missed it They know that there is a life which they never live; that there might arise out of their hearts a love so great, so pure, so commanding and satisfying, that all other experiences of fortune would, in comparison, be of little moment. Royalty and Fortune have no light to fill the vault of life when Love is eclipsed or has gone down. But if Love be regent every other light may go out and it will fill the life with a light that shall make poverty itself luminous, and sickness and toil bright and joyous.

Many and many a heart there is that has missed its aim, confessed its defeat. Some then distribute their affections in many channels, as if to gain by diffusion what they have lost in concentrated form. Some bury their Love and keep watch as over a sepulchre, with sorrow, and yet with hope. Hope on! There is a resurrection for every true heart that, suffering for love, is faithful to the end!

Rose was one of the few who knew beforehand, and as by an inspiration, that she must love upward, and that the man to whom her heart should go forth must be found on no downward path, nor on any level, but along an upward road. It was the want of that over-shadowing power in Barton, the want of that commanding energy, which held her affections in warm friendship, but failed to ripen them into love. And so long as Barton was not the master of himself—so long as he carried a divided life, and uncertain and vacillating hopes, he could not rise to that calmness of strength and loftiness of soul which draw men to a great nature, as birds are drawn to build and sing in the boughs of a great tree.

But, whatever might have been the result had Barton pressed his suit with Rose, he was unconsciously led in a wiser way.

Some of his feelings we have seen in the record of his journal. But he was not destined to maintain his honorable reserve without some painful struggles. The appearance in Norwood of Mr. Thomas J. Heywood was an event intimately connected with his whole after life.

Heywood's mother had an only sister living here, and that fact, joined to the reputation of the place for health and beautiful scenery, led him to choose Norwood in preference to any of the hundred points of attraction in New England for a summer's resort. No considerable intimacy had existed between these two sisters

His mother had married early and always had lived in the South. Visits had, to be sure, been occasionally interchanged; but that was all. They loved each other because they had the same mother, and because they lived hundreds of miles apart. Had they lived together, utterly different tastes and associations would have produced discord. As it was, each imagined the other to be what she wished her to be.

Heywood, or as he always called himself and was called in his home, Tom Heywood, was about Barton's age, of peculiarly winning manners, uniting a certain lofty air to a genial familiarity.

To be reared in wealth may or may not be a blessing. But to inherit a sound constitution, a mind of good quality and inclining to moral and intellectual pursuits, a disposition elastic and cheery, surely this is to be born to fortune. If to this be added the society of cultivated people, and companions who both love and admire one, it may well be expected that a young man's head would be slightly turned. Tom Heywood's head, however, stood quite well upon his shoulders, and he showed very little spoiling. It is probable that he perceived the good impression which he made wherever he went. The flattering cordiality with which his advances had always been received had not tended wholly toward humility. In honest truth, there was a gentle impression in his mind that he was very attractive, and that when he should find a woman of qualities admirable enough, he had only to pass through the decorous processes of approach and acquaintance, and to propose himself to her with due ardor, to be duly and heartily accepted. This slightest bit of conceit was almost unknown to himself. It was the unconscious effect upon a sensible and honorable nature of having been a supreme favorite from childhood. But it did not stain through and affect his manners. It remained latent, restrained from expression by good sense and good breeding. On his first visit to Norwood he spent but a summer, visiting very little except in his aunt's family. So well was he pleased, that the next season he returned early, and with the purpose of study as well as amusement. And although for a time he preferred rooms at the Mansion House, toward autumn he accepted the continuous solicitations of his aunt and her husband, and became a member of their family, and took the place of a son, their only child, who had died a few years before, just as he was entering upon manhood. It was said by those who thought they knew, that it was Josiah Chandler's intention to make Heywood his heir. However this may have been, there can be no reasonable doubt that Mrs. Chandler proposed in her heart to secure that for him which it had been the hope of her life to secure for her son—a connection with the Wentworths. And during the summer of 1859, and the winter following, Tom Heywood was very generally spoken of as Rose's suitor. But the same thing had been said of Frank Esel of Barton Cathcart, and of several others, and all the stories about Tom Heywood might have been just as baseless.

Until we learn something about it from the parties themselves, it may be as well to imagine that we know nothing about it.

We prefer to let Heywood give his own impressions of Norwood and its people.

HEYWOOD TO HIS BROTHER.

"MY DEAR HAL:—In spite of your predictions, I am settled in Norwood! It is *not* a huge jumble of bricks, as you predicted, nor a noisy manufacturing town swarming with operatives. On the contrary, I find an extremely attractive village, of a few thousand inhabitants, nestled down close upon the Connecticut river, and in sight of goodly hills. To be sure, these mountains, as they are here called, would cut a sorry figure by the side of the mountains in old Virginia, but they are quite promising in their way. I quite admire the good taste and snugness of these Yankee houses. Especially do I approve of setting back the houses and separating them from the street by deep ornamental yards. There is an air of elegance and seclusion given to the buildings which, if, like our village houses, they were placed on the very line of the street without shrubbery or grounds, they would utterly fail of having.

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"Behold me, then, prying and spying, sharp as a lynx, but just as a judge—a political economist of whom Henry C. Carey need not be ashamed! Expect from me no vain discourses of sport; nothing of horses or hounds; nothing of hunting or fishing; nothing of frivolous pleasures, which I am expected suitably to look down upon. I am in Puritan New England! Already I feel my face sensibly longer. My features are changing into a sharper and more inflexible cast! I no longer spend my money needlessly—no; I am infected with economy—I ask the price of every thing, turn it over with an inspecting eye, as if weighing the great question of the relation of price to cost of production. I pay with slowness, and count the change with solemnity. 'When you are among the Romans,' etc. The nasal twang I am practising. If you should come hither, do not look for a chestnut-haired, blue-eyed young fellow, with a cherry cravat flaming at his throat, a cigar in his mouth, laughing loud enough to be heard all over the village; look for a precise young gentleman, stepping with only less formality than is required at a funeral, and looking as earnest and as anxious as such eyes and features can—then recognize your friend! How long I shall enjoy my metamorphosis I cannot predict; but it is certain that I am amused at my own propriety thus far.

"I will keep you advised, every few weeks, of my affairs, and shall expect in return a full disclosure of all at home, which I hardly dare think about for fear an unmanly home-sickness may befall me. But, good-bye! Be virtuous, and you shall be happy!

"Tom Heywood.

"*P. S.*—I have just come in from a stroll, since writing the above, and my vanity is a little piqued. I overheard one of the young clerks saying to another, 'I know that fellow is Southern, by the free and easy way he uses money!' So all my efforts are no deception! What would they think if they saw me at home?

"Another thing,—and horrible to relate,—I have just learned that there is a race-ground at Springfield, hardly twenty miles from here! Is this New England? Have I not held my peace, as if even to speak of field-sports would banish me from all respect? I am informed that while racing is discouraged, trotting is so much in vogue, that, in agricultural fairs, it constitutes the chief attraction!

"How does that compare with our notions of Puritan strictness? Who knows but I may find out that this gelid land and rigorous people may have, under their ribs, as much heart as Virginians have, with only a different way of showing it?

"I must draw rein, or my postscript will be longer than my letter. A woman's postscript, you know, is said to contain the gist of the letter, or, as you would say, the letter is the pistol, and the postscript the bullet. Again, fare thee well! T. H."

HEYWOOD TO HIS BROTHER.

"Thanks, dear Hal, for your long and substantial letter. You are the best of all correspondents.

"Your letters are pictures. Strange, that a sheet of paper, with mere lines and blotches, should bring before the mind more clearly than painting could do objects which they only suggest by the law of association, but don't represent in the slightest degree in form or color! After reading your letter, do I not see the dear old home in living form? father—tall, dignified, fiery, and yet running over with kindness—every day blazing out at something, and yet cheery, placable, and generous to a fault?

"Do I not see Sue and Mary romping? and young Hillyer, with that good-natured, boastful tongue, running like Miller Gibbs's wheel,—foam without, and yet grinding good grain within? I really felt a qualm of home-sickness as I read your charming account of matters—coming in early from the garden with flowers for the breakfast table. But home-sickness is unweanedness. Its existence and severity show how much need there was of removing from home, and of learning to live by one's self.

"I am sure I have enough to do, and matters of a kind congenial to my tastes. I am studying this Yankee people with the utmost zest. Of course, many of them are like our own folks. Cultivated people are always more or less alike the world over. On that very account one studies the middle and lower classes for distinctive characters, as there, if anywhere, is apt to be found originality and eccentricity. I had an impression that the rigor of Puritan morals, and a coercive public sentiment, held every thing here down to set patterns, and that I should find a dreary sameness of a kind not very interesting. But the under people here are rich in peculiarities. They open up well already.

"In the South there is more liberty of *action*, and in the North of *thought*. Law is not so strong among us. A population thinly scattered through wide territory are obliged to take their affairs into their own hands, and are less likely to wait for redress or opportunity for the slow process of law. Men here live in attrition, yet universally respect the law. Among the lower classes Law is put instead of Religion. Yesterday a man had been aggrieved by a neighbor. I heard him say, in a great passion, 'I'll have the law of him if there's any justice in the land.' Had it been in Virginia, the man would have thrashed the offender on the spot, and settled his grievance without judge or jury.

"I hardly know how to convey my impressions of Yankee activity. It is something fearful to me. Leisure and laziness seem to be regarded as equivalents. There is a constant pushing industry. I see this strikingly in the conveniences about their dwellings. Almost every house might be studied by our people to learn how many comforts and economies may be concentrated in a dwelling without expense, except of wit and skill.

"I should never have known but for this New England experience what wealth there is in economy. And what economy is possible when people put as much thought and earnestness into every detail of life as they do here! It is a perfect study and amusement to me. Brought up to hear the Yankee stigmatized as stingy and mean, I cannot divest myself of a certain contempt for their minute frugality, and their everlasting calculations, and the repression of impulse in favor of principle, or foresight, or prudence of some sort or other.

"I cannot better illustrate the traits of some of this people than in giving an account of a fellow called Hiram Beers, who seems to have an eye on this whole community, and whose tongue walks to and fro and cuts like a razor. He is a wag, and yet as far from being a fool as he is from being a gentleman.

"Did I tell you that I had bought a horse?—a Morgan horse—with his hoofs filled with steel springs, and his eyes with lambent fire?

"But I must not take the credit of buying, but of only consenting to his purchase. Hiram Beers is my good angel. By the way, if you were to call him *Beers*, nobody would know whom you meant, on a week day. *Hiram* is his name. And though there may be a hundred Hirams hereabouts, only he is *Hiram!*

"You might search all the Old Dominion for such a specimen and not find it. He is the growth of this community, as much as air plants are of the tropics. He is a mixture of deacon, doctor, jockey, jester and philosopher—if you can imagine what that com pound would be. He is of that nervous temperament that sleeps little, eats little, works incessantly, thinks and talks for his own mere relief. And yet, contradictory as it may sound, he produces the impression on you of a shrewd, cautious and considerate man He is always saying some humorous thing, and giving half-laughs as if he had thought of something else and could not afford the rest of a laugh. He knows every body that ever lived in Norwood. Every summer, when the town is thronged, Hiram knows who has come, where he stays, when he goes. It is the same, apparently, for the whole neighborhood. And as for horses, his knowledge is intuitive, and almost a homely omniscience.

"Behold me then, sitting in the office of the Mansion House the very disciple of this cute and curious Yankee teacher!

"'Beers, I want a good horse——'

"'My name is Hiram;—I keep Beers for Sunday. When I get my meetin' clo's on, I expect folks to call me Beers, or Hiram Beers; but week days I go and come on Hiram. What was you sayin'?'

"'Can you tell me where to look for a good horse?

"'Wal, Bledsoe's got abeout the best steppin' creetur that I know of. Can do it in about two-thirty, and do it every time sound as a knot; hain't a scratch on her; silk feels coarse after ye take yer hand off her hide; and the lovin'ist eye ye ever saw in a man's head, or a woman's either.'

"'What does he ask for her?'

"'Wal, I don't know,' said Hiram, glancing at one or two persons present, and then looking steadily out of the window for a minute. 'I guess you'll have to wait till he's sold off every thing else pretty much down to her. After he's sold his wife and children, I expect you may get a bargain out of him for the mare.'

"'But I asked you for a horse that I could *buy*.'

"'Mebbe you did. But all I heerd you say was,—Can you tell me where I can look for a good horse? Now you can *look* at Bledsoe's horse for a year runnin', and he won't charge you nothin'.'

"I colored a little, but Hiram did not move a feature, or look away from an empty fireplace into which every now and then he squirted a volley of tobacco spittle.

"Presuming that I had neglected a proper fee, and that there was the rub, after a few minutes I quietly slipped a dollar bill into his hand. Slowly unrolling it, he examined the engraving, read the signatures, held it up to the light, and then gravely handed it back to me.

"'Yes, Mr. Heywood, that's a good bill—ginooine—no counterfeit about it.'

"'Keep it, Hiram—keep it.'

"'What should I keep it for? You don't owe me any thing!'

"'Well, Hiram, I ought to pay you for any information I can get.'

"'Oh, you think the information about Bledsoe's mare is worth a dollar, do ye? Wal, I don't. Put up your money to pay your debts with. When I've *airnt* it, it'll be time to pay me. If you want me to lay myself out for you on a good horse, say so, and then I'll tell ye what I'll do it for. I don't want no charity yet.'

"'Very well. I wish a good horse, as good a horse as can be had, without going to an extravagant price, and I am willing to pay your expenses and trouble if you will serve me.'

"'I'll show you five good creturs, and if any of 'em suit you, you may pay me ten dollars; and if I fetch you five more, you may pay me fifteen, and then if you ain't suited, I can't please you.'

"A few days afterwards, I was called down to try a horse. It was a picture! Black as a coal, and not a *spot* on him. Docile and obedient, but with immense spirit. I had not driven a half mile before I was satisfied.

"'Hiram, this'll do. I'll take him. What's the price?'

"'Well, now, you was born down South, war'nt you? If you had been born along the Connecticut you'd asked the price first, and held off a good bit, afore you let a fellow know whether you was pleased or not. Howsumever, it's all right. I thought I'd try you, and so I brought the best one first. If you'd neglected this, you'd sartainly have got a poor one.'

"'Well, I like him so much,' said I, the next day, 'that I am willing to pay you twice as much as I promised,' offering him tw ten dollar bills. Hiram took one of them, folded it carefully, pu it in his wallet, and then looking in an amusing way at the head of some president of a bank, engraved on the other bill, he began to soliloquize. 'Yes, old fellow—president of a bank—no doubt rich as medder land. Made it all yourself, too. I s'pose you bought at just what folks said. I s'pose you paid twice as much as you promised! That's the way hereabouts in New England. That's the way to get rich,' and with that he laughed down in his belly, though only a sniff or two came out of his face. Handing me back my money, with very much the benignant air with which a relaxing father gives back a forfeited jackknife to a repentant boy, he lectured me in a most edifying manner.

"'I've seen a good many men from your parts. They come up here every summer, and are very flush of money. They think they can buy every body. They fall in with a low sort of people and foreigners, mere hangers-on, and such creturs will take as long as you will give. Lord, sir, they are like a barrel with two bung-holes, one atop and the other under. You may pour in all day and they won't fill up. But they are not our people. The fact is, we northern men work hard, and have to. We know the value of time, and stuff, and work, and if we weren't close as bark we should all be in the poorhouse. But there is a sight of difference between being tight and being mean. If a man airns his money he has a right to it, and to the last cent jest as much as to the first. And if a man hasn't airn'd it, he's a mean cuss if he takes it anyhow, unless he's extremely old, very lame, and hain't got no children, nor relations, and is afeerd of goin' to the poorhouse. That's the very difference between an Irishman and a Yankee; a Yankee wants his own money, an Irishman wants *yours*.'

"I was too much amused to find fault with Hiram's airs, especially as he gave me to understand that he highly esteemed my judgment in stable matters, and, in the under society of the town, you may be sure Hiram's opinion established my reputation; for he is the oracle."

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HEYWOOD TO HIS BROTHER.

"MY DEAR HAL:—You rally me upon the character of my acquaintances, and compliment me upon the improvement which will appear when I return from this elysium of gardens, workmen, hostlers, &c. It would be a pity that you should fail of your own enjoyment, since I certainly have mine. Working people, in a community where work is the badge of servitude, cannot represent the value and personal excellence of working men in a different state of society where nothing is more honorable than labor, where all, more or less, perform it; where men are taught from childhood that manliness and honor require one to be personally as much as possible independent of others' help, and to perform with one's person a large part of the offices which, with us, servants are expected to render. So much, at least, I have already found out. As a student of political economy, I begin to perceive facts and truths about this northern population, which I could never have learned but by living among them. The common people of such communities give tone and character to society, more than do the educated people. For they are intelligent, inquisitive, endlessly curious of knowledge, and accustomed to dispute and argue every question that arises. They are readers of books and devourers of newspapers. It would be impossible to find in all New England, in the remotest and rudest portions, such neighborhoods of hopeless ignorance as we have at home, on every hand.

"But you inquire what other acquaintances I have formed? Many, and most agreeable ones. What intimacies have ensued? Well, but *one* companionship as yet. I am becoming warmly interested in a young man here, who has been teaching here since he left college, and who designed studying for the pulpit. But some trouble of mind, I know not what, seems to shut that avenue, and he is now, in his leisure, studying law with Judge Bacon, and so we are much thrown together.

"I suspect that there is more than the love of science that takes Barton Cathcart to Dr. Wentworth's house. There is a Miss Rose Wentworth, you should understand, whom, not her features, but her expression makes handsome. When her face kindles, as it easily does, it is surprisingly attractive. Quite learned, I am told, and especially a lover of the fields and forest, as all maidens at the sentimental period of their lives are or ought to be. This inclination was inherited from her father, Dr. Reuben Wentworth, and the tendency became fixed by his careful education of his daughter. This I am told by friends of the doctor, who look upon him not only as a man of remarkable skill in his profession, but as an original nature in as utter contrast with the surrounding people as an opal is with the rock in which it is imbedded. Judge Bacon, an astute New-England man, himself a notable character, calls Dr.

Wentworth an idealistic naturalist with a practical shell on. By the way, Barton's own sister and his only one, Miss Alice Cathcart, was at Dr. Wentworth's yesterday. Like her brother, she is brunette. Both of them have high blood—I know it by the clearness of the features, the fine lines of the lips. The whole face and form represent the higher human element—moral sentiments and intelligence, more than the animal nature; and this is what I call high breeding.

"The two young ladies, Miss Rose and Miss Alice, are of one age to a night and a day, and call themselves the twins with two mothers.

"My acquaintances are limited and casual. With Judge Bacon, more than with any one, I have had familiar intercourse. He is one who might have been born in Virginia. What higher compliment could I pay?

"But I find many Southern families here, and were I so minded I might pass my time from morning to night in agreeable company. But I have other ends in view than mere amusement. Do not smile when I say that I am reading diligently. Why should I bore you with *that?* I know that you would rather hear of sports, horses, people—and so I have written!"

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

HEYWOOD RETURNS—ESEL DEPARTS.

While Heywood was spending the winter at his father's house and enjoying all the recreations which abounded in the hospitable old Virginian mansion, he found himself unwittingly thrown into an attitude of defence of his Northern friends. Although he was thoroughly Southern in his prepossessions and prejudices, yet he was highly endowed with the sentiment of justice, and it was not consistent with his honorable nature to hear his late acquaintances undervalued and stigmatized, when he knew the imputations to be unjust. The same thing had happened reversely while he was at Norwood. Thus, in the North he defended the South and opposed Northern prejudices, and in the South he defended much which he had witnessed in Northern society, and opposed the violent tone which prevailed among his companions. He was not one of those whose pride it is, returning from foreign travel, to boast that they have seen nothing worthy of imitation in all their journeys—a confession that they have learned nothing, and well nigh an evidence that they are capable of learning nothing. Of a studious and reflective turn of mind, he had eagerly observed and reasoned upon the interior facts of Northern society, and particularly its industry and its universal education. He had not succeeded in breaking away from those fatal notions of political economy instilled into his own generation, nor did he yet see clearly the philosophic explanation of that diversified industry and universal prosperity which he beheld. But he was on the way.

The prejudices of his friends, which once were his also, served to show him how far he was changed.

"Come, Tom," said his favorite sister, "be a good boy and own how much better you like the South than you do that mean New England."

"Most certainly, fair Kate, I prefer the South, but without prejudice to New England. *You* ought to think well of a land which gave you such a mother as ours."

"Ah! mother came away from the North when she was but seventeen; and then she was of good family, and never worked for a living."

"It is true that she did not; but *her* mother did. Her father was a farmer's boy, and made his fortune by integrity and industry. Every one respected him for his solid worth."

"No matter, Tom; mother is a Virginian and not a Yankee. All her habits and thoughts have been formed here, and every body says that she is a true specimen of a Southern lady."

"I am not a whit behind you in love for mother and admiration for our own native State; but if you mean to imply that only in the South can be found gentlemen and ladies of the highest breeding, I cannot go with you. Nay, I know from my own observations that this very New England, which you so little know, or you would not so detest it, is full of families that no man can but respect and admire. I speak from my own knowledge. No one could see Farmer Cathcart, who works daily for his living, and not respect his sturdy independence and admire his great intelligence. His daughter Alice,—ah! Kate, if she were here you would need to look out for your laurels. But even she would not command your admiration so much as Rose Wentworth would."

"Well done, Tom!" cried his beautiful sister, who was as fierce as a dove, and as restless as a humming bird, and full as dangerous, and whose duty it seemed to be, on all proper occasions, to manifest a State patriotism. "Well done, Tom; I wonder that you ever came back single! Pray, why did you not bring one of those high-born Yankee dames with you, to outshine us all?"

"Stranger things than that have happened. If your father went to New England for a wife, why shouldn't his son? And his notable success adds encouragement. Indeed, I think that I only want a little opposition on your part, or on the part of some of my friends, to propose for Miss Wentworth and marry her."

"Of course you would. And I don't mean to give you the motive—though it would rescue one more Yankee girl, and by bringing her into good society it might be the making of her."

"Come, come, my dear sister, this is all very well for jesting. But I tell you in good earnest, that it is not just or wise for the people of our one country to spend their time in deepening prej udices and promoting alienation. The times are hot enough already. I confess that I dread the future, unless there can be infused more moderation and mutual respect on both sides."

"Who cares?" said young Hillyer. "Let times grow bad—I know who'll suffer, and who will not. The Yankees are a mean spirited, peddling set. We have managed them for fifty years, and we shall do it still. I could thrash ten of them without winking. I hope I may see the day that we shall try it on!"

"Well, Hillyer," replied Heywood, with a grave countenance, "it will be a terrible day for our country if the North and South should go to arms. I have no doubt of our valor, but I have just as little of theirs. They are not a people who like fighting. They will be slow to enter upon it. But, if ever it is thrust upon them, they will take up war like a trade and learn it thoroughly. New England has had the prejudices of this whole nation against her for a hundred years, and yet she, more than any part of the Union, has gone right on prospering in every element that makes States strong. And I do not believe that she is likely to be checked now. But this talk is all folly. At any rate, God grant that we may never put to proof our respective opinions."

With such views, it will not surprise our readers to learn that Heywood returned to Norwood for the second season with far more eagerness than when he had first sought it. His lively sister sent him back loaded with injunctions against apostasy from the true Southern spirit. "I will never, never forgive those Yankees if they get my brother away from me.'

Every man, we are often told, has a mission in this life. Josiah Chandler happily found out his mission, which many people never do; or if they do, then one cannot but marvel that they should be sent so far on so poor an errand. Josiah Chandler's mission was to make and keep money. He was of slender stature. A round head, with a face not noticeable, unless, upon close examination, you discovered a shrewd look about his eyes. He was in no sense a genius. He simply possessed consummate good judgment in business. He had no passions. He was always calm. He was never carried away by immoderate expectations; never speculated. He was one of the few men whose success did not unsteady or so excite that he could not take sure aim. For twenty years he increased his gains surely and gradually. For ten years more wealth came faster. Every thing he touched seemed to prosper. Had his son lived, he would have gone on accumulating probably to the end of life. But that death seemed to give a shock to his whole nature. Why should he go on toiling without an end or aim in life except to amass property, of which already he had far more than he could employ? Mr. Chandler had no ambition to be thought rich. Indeed he was far richer than any one knew. He began to wind up his affairs, to consummate such enterprises as were on hand, and to institute no others. He built him a large and comely mansion, and for a year this gave him occupation. Not a nail was driven without his inspection. Every board and beam, every particle of paint, strip of lead, pane of glass, came under his scrutiny. Conveniences of every kind were multiplied. He never talked to any one, not even to his wife, of what was going on. Diligent, shrewd, watchful, unostentatious, thorough, and, above all, silent, was he. If any thing went wrong no one knew it. If things succeeded beyond his expectation, no one knew that. He kept his own counsel. One would have thought that it was in his eyes a mortal sin to speak of his own affairs: not a man in town would have been personally so little missed.

After he moved into his mansion, every thing fell into orderly arrangements, seemingly without special effort from any one. He was mildly pious. He never knowingly did wrong. He presumed himself to be sinful, as he had been assured that he was; and it was a cardinal practice with him not to contradict. He observed the Sabbath day with calm acquiescence. He had united with the Church not from any passionate experience, but because for some unexplained reason he thought it the right thing to do. But his whole life moved on as shadows creep over the ground from the west to the east, attracting no attention and making no noise.

One day Dr. Wentworth called upon some business, and found him in his library. He was astonished at the beauty of the room and at the number of books. Then first it was found out that Josiah Chandler had a curious taste for books, with a speciality of love for old books. No one had ever heard him speak of books. No one had seen boxes unloading at his door. He was the last man in town who would have been suspected of such a mania Yet on examination Dr. Wentworth found a large collection of rare tracts, scarce books—illustrating American history. He had gathered them up in a quiet way. They were bound in Boston and returned to Norwood, and took their places in his library. without sign or hint to any one. How much he had read of them no one knew. It was certain that he knew something of every volume, especially its bibliographical history. That same instinct of facts which had given him such success in business was manifest in this dry and silent amusement of his leisure.

How grateful ought we to be to that distributive Providence which draws men and women to each other, not by agreements and likenesses, but also by differences. Otherwise, people coming together by elective affinities would whirl away down the path of life,—tall people with tall, short people with short, sober with sober, the merry with the merry, the good with the good, and the bad with the bad. And the end would be that the world's population would soon become fixed in certain lines, and run into the extremest exaggerations. But, now, a tall man snatches up a darling little short creature for his wife. He has had tallness enough, and wants variety. All the town is aghast when it learns that some Amanda Sexton, the finest woman of the place, beautiful as a rose, has surrendered herself to some Luther Walpole, whose face is so homely as to make one almost doubt the benevolence of Providence. And so a devout woman is joined to a merry, thoughtless wretch; and in like manner a grave and reverend man is led about by some rosy, sprightly creature, who foams and sparkles on his surface, as the beautiful water-crests do upon deep and solemn waves.

In only one thing was his wife like unto Josiah Chandler. Neither of them had any illusions. He saw things in their most absolute literalness; she saw people, and their action, without charitable or malign mists, but in a merciless truthfulness. And though a wise woman, yet she spoke out with a literal truthfulness which frequently astonished men, accustomed to the indirections, the disguises, and the deceptions of society. She was a large, portly woman, of a serene, but fine and energetic countenance. She was in every way superior to her husband except in the singular talent for making and administering wealth. She could converse; he could not. She had tastes refined by literature and good society; he was one of those men that you would forget to notice, and, whether he was cultivated, really you forgot to inquire.

She studied with profound sympathy the writings of Jonathan Edwards and Madam Guion; he read Scott's Commentaries and Barnes's Notes on the Gospels. Every morning, at family prayers, he read five or six verses of Scripture from Scott's Bible, and then came rivers of interpretations, and notes, and improvements which overflowed and submerged the Scripture texts, and left them lying like pond-lilies in a broad lake—a few silver cups exquisitely floating on a wilderness of waters! Yet, patient as he was, he seldom could read at a sitting the whole of those prelections by which Scott converted the Bible into an exceeding great army of unpreached sermons. After he had read to the limit of time, he would break off with a quiet "and so forth, and so forth, with much more to the same purpose."

Does any one believe that she loved him? Is it possible that one in every range of faculty so much larger and richer, could fail to perceive the unmatched condition in which she lived? Did she marry for wealth? She seemed to care little for it, except as a means of kindness. Did she in youth have more imagination than now, and suffer herself to see him through iridescent mists of love awakened by fancy? And having awakened to the literal reality, did pride lead her ever after to cover the mistake by an appearance of affection? If she was playing a part, it was superbly done. No man, however sharply he might discriminate, could detect the slightest signs of affected regard. On the contrary, there were all the tokens of a real, enduring affection.

Agate Bissell had been skeptical, but even she yielded:

"It's no use. You may as well give it up. That woman does love that man, what there is of him, and it's the Lord's wonder!"

Heywood had been brought up in an atmosphere of hospitality. There was a certain largeness in the home-life of his father's house. There was always more or less of company. Every one was free to come and go according to his own good pleasure. There were horses in the stable for such as would ride; guns and rods for such as loved the field and the stream. Seldom was there a day when the family was at home when the young people could not find enough companions for all summer sports and amusements. Enjoyment was not casual and special. It was the ruling element

It must be confessed that the change to Norwood habits was great, and that in his aunt's mansion the contrast was still more violent. All was sedate; all was peaceful, regular, silent.

But after a while he began to lose that latent repugnance which at first barred familiarity. As soon as he had made up his mind not to compare his aunt's household with his mother's, but to consider it as a new species to be studied by itself, he began to find points of curiosity and of attraction. He recognized, also, a distinct influence which his aunt exerted upon him, and he could not help admiring both the shrewdness and solidity of her judgments upon men and things in society.

It was novel to Heywood to find a woman of strong sense, of clear discernment, who always spoke the truth, and who loved to have the truth spoken to her. This last trait was remarkable. She refused to be praised in the slightest degree beyond what she esteemed fair. But a merited compliment she accepted with manifest pleasure. Not remarkable for insight and analysis of the subtle elements of character, she saw those broad effects which are developed in action with accuracy, and judged them impartially. Heywood soon found in his aunt a friend whom he could trust implicitly, and whose judgment was invaluable; and every month of his stay made absence from his home easier to bear.

The appearance in Norwood society for a second season of this brilliant young Southerner could not fail to create an interest in all concerned, and that was not a small number. There was no house at which he would not have been welcome. The young people deemed his presence at any gathering a sure presage of a brilliant time. All admitted that Norwood had never seen, and would not soon again see, three such glorious fellows as Frank Esel, Tom Heywood and Barton Cathcart.

Frank Esel had maintained his intimacy at Dr. Wentworth's. His admiration had not abated. In spite of all his philosophy, he had found himself more and more carried forward toward that intoxication of feeling where one ceases to be the master of himself and the judgment loses control, and every object is seen in the color of passionate love. This growing feeling could not fail to be observed by Rose. It troubled her So much was there in Frank Esel to admire, so sound was his moral nature, his heart was so good, and his tastes so refined. that Rose Wentworth placed a sincere value upon his friendship. Few women can decline a proffered love without wounding both pride and vanity. Not many men are noble enough to accept friendship when their love has been refused. Pride and vanity, too deeply wounded by defeat, often change to anger, and men seek to undervalue what they have failed to secure.

Returning home with Miss Wentworth from an afternoon's gathering in the village, Frank Esel thought that she had never seemed so beautiful as on this day. It chanced that the doctor and Mrs. Wentworth had gone out to make some evening call. The young folks were in the other part of the house, and Rose sat in her father's library. There rose in Frank's heart an impulse, as often before, but which now seemed to rise and impel him in spite of every resistance which he could make. All the prudent resolves he had formed were gone, and seemed like faint memories, pale and afar off. He began to speak, and started at his own voice. His color came and vanished. And so much was he agitated that Rose perceived it, nor was the meaning unknown to her.

How much one may think in the duration of a flash! Under low excitements the mind finds its way from thought to thought gradually. But when the brain is fired, whole fields of thought spring up before the mind like pictures, and all progression of view seems to give place to instantaneousness of sight.

In one and the same instant Rose saw and determined all these things, viz.: that a crisis had come in Frank Esel's feelings, that the tide was too strong to be stayed or turned aside, that should he be suffered to pour out all his heart, he would, in the necessary disappointment which must befall him, not only greatly suffer in pride, but lose by rebound a position of friendship full of pleasure to both of them, that it was far better that she should herself take the initiative, and, meeting his rising feeling, forestall it. Her purpose was taken instantly; and when Frank, suddenly rising, came toward her, with glowing cheek and an eye almost wild, she rose to meet him, and, extending her hand to his, she said, with a voice in which command and kindness were blended:

"My dear cousin Frank, come and sit down by me on the sofa, until I say what I am sure you will forgive me for saying! Our acquaintance has been a joy to me. I have learned much from you, and much more I hope to learn. I value your friendship, and ask for it. Frank, I am grateful and proud of your good and kind thoughts of me. It would be a grief all my life if any darkness should come between us. No, my dear cousin, do not speak—I know what you would say. I know that you would be sorry *if* you said it, and I should be too; for, Frank, better friends than we are there could not be, but more than friendship is impossible."

Then Rose's voice trembled, and her face was suffused with blushes as, with great sensibility, she turned full upon Esel, and added:

"Forgive me, Frank, for my boldness, and accept it as the token of my friendship, that I say, before you have even spoken of love to me, that you must not speak of it! Do not think ill of me, Frank, that I decline what has not been offered. I would have had it otherwise. And now I would save you from uttering a word which, in a few hours, you would be grieved that you had said. For, it must not be. Nothing is more certain, Frank, absolutely certain, than that you must rest contented with friendship. I must not detain you—I hear voices—father is returning. Come hither to-morrow night, and be your own noble self, and my friend. Pardon the pain—I am sure that you will believe it kindness."

"One word, if I may—one word, Miss Wentworth——"

"*Miss* Wentworth! Then you are offended?"

"No, cousin—cousin Rose! I am only bewildered! May I ask?—no, I will not ask the question!—Good night!"

As he passed out of the door he met Dr. Wentworth and his wife; but Frank seemed indeed, as he had said, like one bewildered. He was going on without salutation, till the doctor spoke:

"Good-evening, Mr. Esel. Whither away so fast?—the evening is not yet spent!"

"How do you do, sir;—I mean good night, sir;—I quite forgot."

"Why, what is all this?" said Dr. Wentworth to his wife. "What has happened to Esel? He talks as if he had been drinking."

His wife with woman's wit suspected the state of the case, and only replied:

"Oh, it's some little dispute, I dare say. But if nothing is said to us, we had better not inquire."

Leaving the door-yard, Esel turned from mere habit in the direction of his rooms. But so absorbed was he in thought that he walked slowly past his boarding-house,—far along the street under the darkness of the great elms,—sometimes pausing,—once or twice crossing the street without knowing it. The alternation between feeling and thought in a mind painfully stirred as Esel's was cannot be set down in any words. Yet, leaving out the hundred flushes of shame, the sharp pangs of regret, the reaction of generous feelings—we may give a faint notion of his state.

"And so it is ended:—(a deep sigh.) Then it was not to entice me that she spoke. There was no need of it. Rose could not do it either. I've brought it on myself—(a blush stole over his face, growing hotter and hotter.) All my resolutions and my better judgment thrown aside,—and the sweetness of infatuated feeling was followed!—(then speaking aloud)—and so plainly did I show it that she saw it, and knew what I was going to say, and anticipated me,—foiled!—outwitted!—fooled! (His voice sounding in the silence seemed to annoy him, and he became silent.) Friendship?—it's easy to convert friendship into love. I've found that out; but, not so easy to put love back into friendship. I see, now—that brilliant Southerner. I wish I *had* asked what was on my tongue's end—Is there any other one whom you love? No, I had no business to do it. To-morrow I will go home. Fool, to have ever gone away. No, I am not a fool. I should have been less than a man if I had not loved her. I am not ashamed of it. I am not worthy of her. God saw it. But I would have given my whole life to becoming worthy of her. I never can see her again—never—never. I could not look upon her and be silent. Now that she knows my secret, how can I look into her eyes without a burning tell-tale face; and that will be a renewing of the suit. Oh, I did not know how far I had gone. This has sucked up my very life."

By this time Esel had strayed out of the village, and was more than half a mile beyond on the road towards Cathcart's. He sat down upon a large white rock as if he were looking at a landscape, though the darkness and silence were remarkable.

The heaven was full of concealed clouds. Now and then a distant flash of lightning revealed them, and long ranges of "thunder heads" shone brilliantly out, but in a second sank back into darkness. Low rolls of heavy thunder sounded the coming on of a storm. A fitful wind swept through the near woods with a sound like rushing waters. In a moment it was gone; not a leaf moved, not a sound was uttered. An unweaned calf bleated from the pasture; a short bark from a distant dog, instantly broken off, gave to the silence a profounder influence. Again and again the cloud ridges and mountains shone out and receded into darkness. Esel sat as if watching this grandest phenomenon of summer, the advance through the heavens of a great storm. But he saw nothing, or was, at least unconscious of seeing any thing. The flashes grew more frequent, the thunder advanced and rolled with deeper cadence; large drops of rain, slung from the clouds, smote the earth—a few only, and they suddenly ceased. A whirl of wind rolled up the the dust along the road, bent the trees in its course, and swayed the bushes almost to the ground, and then fled away and left a dead calm behind. Soon a fine sound filled the air; it was the rain descending in good earnest, and sounding upon a million leaves. It came with a rush upon Esel, and awoke him to some consciousness.

He looked up in surprise as if awakened from sleep. He did not know where he was. Fortunately he took the right direction, and now running, and then walking, to catch his breath, he regained the village, drenched to the skin. The storm accompanied him all the way. It thundered behind him above him, all around him. Torrents poured down, and the roads ran like rivers.

The storm had, at least, restored him to some self-possession, but not to prudence. Casting off a part of his clothes, and throwing a cloak loosely about him, Frank Esel sat down by the open window.

The storm had wasted its substance, or rather appeared to have driven forward like an advancing army, whose artillery was still sounding in the far front, while cloud-stragglers swarmed in the rear.

There was something in this war of the elements that suited Esel's disturbed feelings; yet his mind fell off from the scene before him and wandered back to his childhood. Tears came at the thought of his mother. He strove to bring together the disconnected scenes of his childhood that rose up before him, and to feel that he was that very one; for his very identity seemed slippin from him, and he could hardly make himself feel that he was tha person whom he remembered in so many gay and happy experiences. It was past midnight. A chill crept over him, and he gathered his cloak closer about him. But he was no warmer. He shut the window and retired to his bed; but the sleep he sought fled from him.

At length, toward morning, he fell into an uneasy slumber, and dreamed all manner of dreams. All the day following he was languid and depressed. He knew not what ailed him. He started on looking in the glass to see the haggardness of his own face. Toward evening, remembering Rose Wentworth's wish, he determined to go to her; but a strange apathy seemed to hang upon him. He remembered the different feelings of yesterday as he trod the same path, but remembered them without emotion. As he entered Dr. Wentworth's yard, Rose saw him from the window, and greeted him at the door.

"Frank, this is good and noble. I knew that I did not misjudge you—— But what ails you, Frank? How ghastly you are!"

For a moment a pang of anguish pierced Rose's heart. She could hardly imagine that a disappointment could, in a few hours, work such a change! Esel made haste to say:

"It is nothing. I was imprudent last night. I was caught in the storm and thoroughly wet. I must have taken a severe chill, for I have not felt well since. But it will pass with a good sleep."

Dr. Wentworth, overhearing a word, came from his library.

"What, Esel, did you say you were not well?" He approached and examined him. "Esel, you should return to your room; I will send you some remedies. It may be but a cold; it may come to something more."

The next day the doctor found him in a high fever, and his mind confused and wandering. His mother was sent for. For many weeks he lay helpless. At length the fever left him. It was several weeks yet before he could be moved; and when he could bear the journey, he returned to his home. The love that he had cherished for Rose was no longer a thing of this world. It had risen into the place of devout thoughts. It was like a remembered vision of another world, not lawful to be uttered.

One chamber of his soul was set apart, consecrated, and there his thoughts, as to a shrine, came reverently.

As his health returned, Frank Esel betook himself to his profession with even a deeper feeling than ever. He had become a man. For he had become a disciple of Suffering, the only school master who can bring men to their true manhood. He had passed through his youth-time with abounding joy. Then came the real awakening of his intellect, where new flights seemed like inspirations, and cast a shadow upon all that went before. At last came Suffering! Not that play of care or vexation, which only creases the soul's surface as a puff of wind wrinkles the waters, but sorrow which moves the foundations, and so deepens one's nature. No one has suffered enough until he is patient of suffering. "*Made perfect through suffering!*" Men stamped with this brand have God's mark on them.

But one should not imagine Esel as a discouraged or a broken man. He was never so strong as now. He had in early years insensibly been drawn under the influence of that vicious school of self-contemplatists whose victims revolve around themselves all their lives, watching the development of their own genius and by self-culture attaining to self-consciousness. Esel's natural generosity had restrained him from that besotted conceit which blights so many. But he had not learned to derive his pleasure from the end sought, so much as from the conscious exercise of those faculties by which he sought it. His sickness and previous experiences left upon his mind a deep impression, that in so far as he himself was concerned, life was ended. Now, whatever power he possessed was to be spent for others. All his ambitions now assumed the form of kindnesses. Gradually he found his former enterprise developing itself under new motives. With less exhilaration than formerly, he found far more peace. He seriously questioned whether he should not enter upon the service of the church, and while in that mood he wrote to Dr. Wentworth, a part of whose reply we will print:

* * * * "If you had been living out of the line of action of your strongest faculties, if deep religious feeling had developed powers which had been restrained or overlaid by selfish plans, there might be good reason for a change of profession. But you were born to be an artist. All your faculties and feelings harmonize in the pursuits of art. Why should you change? You speak of self-denial as necessary. Do not search for it. Whenever a lower course, a less worthy feeling, contest better ones, deny them. Do not seek pain for its own sake. Suffering is like many chemical agents, wholesome when combined by nature in organic

forms of fruit or grain, but separated and employed alone, superstimulating and injurious.

"What would you gain? You can seek the moral benefit of society by your art, as really as by sermons, and probably with far greater success. Have you considered in how many ways your peculiar genius can be applied to the refinement and happiness of your fellow-men? Let me state simple cases which I have often imagined. A sweet landscape, painted by one who saw a soul in nature, and not merely forms, hanging in a sick-room for long months, cheers the declining invalid and becomes a minister of consolation. When the spirit is liberated, thereafter, to the whole household, that picture has a sacred association. It becomes a family talisman. When it passes on into another generation, it renews its labor of love,—proving that the spirit of beauty may become a spirit of mercy. I can easily imagine a simple landscape wrought out in the spirit of love by a skilful hand, which shall diffuse more happiness than most men do in a whole life-time.

"But your profession is, Christianly considered, the education of the community by the ministration of Beauty. Painting is only one way of doing this. Why should there not be drawing-classes among the poor as well as sewing-classes, reading-classes, singing-classes, etc.? Men collect funds to put books gratuitously in the dwellings of the poor,—why should not some Christian artist spend a portion of his time in ministering beauty to households of the worthy poor?

"Even if one had no skill in painting, the ministry of beauty does not depend upon manual skill. One might gather flowers day by day, from the fields to cheer the poor and crippled; to stand in schools; or, with faint symbolic power, to bring into gaunt churches some wealth and grace of natural beauty. What if one were to visit the poor-house in each town, and minister,—not alone to the social feelings, to the physical wants,—but to the taste and sympathy of its inmates, with gifts of beauty?

"I have often marvelled that, in a time of such taste and liberality, so little should be done with *trees*. New England might be made a magnificent park, with but a slight expense, if only one dedicated himself to doing good through the love of beauty. Every great road, every bye-road, connecting towns and villages, or neighborhoods, if concert were secured, might not only be judiciously planted, but, by a little study and care in the selection, all the fine trees might in time be employed, one road being lined with oaks, another with elms, another with pines or spruces, another with maples, another with purple beeches, and so on, until every county would become an arboretum. Such is the spirit of emulation that, if a single town should perfect this work, other towns would catch the inspiration, and the work would go on with energy until an unclothed road would become a reproach. All this is a part of the work of true benevolence. If you would teach within the church, you must seek ordination at the hands of man. But whose heart soever God has touched with a spirit of benevolence is ordained to go forth into society and preach the gospel to every creature, each man speaking in the language of his own business!" * * *

Esel had never been so busy as now, and was never so cheerful. Yet he carried in his heart a feeling that never died. There was no hope in it, but a gentle patience. It burned on in solitude, like a sacred lamp, which hermit hands trim and feed in some recluse's cell or cave far away from the fever of the world.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CONTRASTS.

If people are attracted by their opposites, as some hold, there was every reason to suspect that a strong sympathy would draw Heywood and Cathcart together for they represented in a striking manner contrasting elements. Heywood's face was fine, even beautiful. Blue eyes, chestnut hair, inclining to curl, fine complexion, and fresh color,—need it be said that his was a sanguine temperament? Cathcart's, striking in appearance rather by expression than by positive beauty of features, dark and piercing eyes, features framed both for strength and refinement, black hair;—his temperament, too, could not be mistaken. Heywood's face was genial, and when excited radiant. His whole soul shone through it. Excitement shot fire through every feature of Cathcart's face; but every one felt that more lay behind than was expressed There was a sense of repressed feeling and reserved enthusiasm. Heywood would flame soonest, Cathcart would burn the longest.

They were contrasted in mental qualities. Barton Cathcart's mind was reflective, Tom Heywood's perceptive. Both were reasoners; but Heywood loved physical facts, and reasoned upon them. Cathcart reasoned more deeply upon relations of facts, and upon more subtle philosophies. As was natural, Heywood loved to reason upon the actions of men, the events of society. Cathcart inclined to the study of the causes of events, the nature of the mind, and the structure of society.

It was natural for Heywood to utter, and to long to utter, whatever he had wrought out in thinking, and he left the impression that in his frankness he had expressed all that he had thought.

On the other hand, Barton Cathcart, without seeming reserved left the impression that he offered you but a sheaf from a field, and that the reserved treasure far surpassed that revealed.

They were more nearly alike in disposition, but as contrasted as possible in the forms which disposition took on. Heywood's conscience developed in the form of Honor. Cathcart's moral sense had been trained as a deep, reflective, religious feeling, rather than as a social element.

Heywood did right, as in the sight of men; Cathcart as in the sight of God. Both were kind, with great disinterestedness; but in the Southerner it was demonstrative and generous. Less demonstrative in the Northerner, perhaps less prompt, and far less attractive, it endured longer and achieved more. In the one it was a blossom, in the other a fruit.

Heywood had been reared in affluence, and had never learned o work, nor to have sympathy with those who did. Barton Cathcart had been inured from childhood to toil, and was drawn by vital sympathy to all who labored. The Virginian was born to command. He had looked down upon men from the necessity of his social position, there being but two classes in the society in which he was bred—that class in which men must work, and that in which they must not. The New Englander had been reared in a true democracy, in which classes represented the relative forces of the actors, into which and out of which men passed at their pleasure, and in which there were few leaders and no aristocracy, except that which was conferred by the consent of all.

In religion they were equally contrasted. Reared an Episcopalian, Heywood regarded religious truths as something settled beyond all questioning—worked out and fixed as definitely as are the elements of mathematics. He had never searched the grounds of truth. The church he believed to have been shaped and patterned by God as much as the natural world was. He would as soon have thought of discussing the authenticity of heat, or the propriety of frost, as of the services of the church. Ordination was a natural law—the ministry a part of the constitution of the world.

Barton Cathcart had been reared even more earnestly to believe in revealed religion. But, from his childhood, an appeal had been made to his reason. Nothing marks so strikingly the faith of New England in the truth of her religious systems as the boldness with which she has always challenged for them the utmost scrutiny of Reason. Cathcart, from an early period, felt himself drawn into deep thought. He could not rest with traditional knowledge and hereditary faith. He pursued inquiries into the nature of the human mind, —whose nature will in the end determine all formulas, as its philosophy has in every age fashioned all theologies. He analyzed the doc trines of the church, and disputed many of them. Led on by an indomitable desire of knowing the very truth, he explored the Bible for himself with indefatigable zeal. Finding the extreme reactionary Protestant doctrine, that the Bible was the sole fountain of religious truth, could not be true, he began to question the grounds of inspiration; then the reality of the truths revealed; what truth was only relative to a process, a condition, and an age, and what was absolute—alike true to every people in every age, and in all conditions of their development and progress.

Such a career of thought would have been as impossible to the brilliant Virginian as the act of flying. He believed that the church categories of truth were so absolutely true, that it was audacious even to question them. Investigation he deemed to consist in assuming these, and simply seeing how far one might go consistently with them.

Not only did Heywood rest unquestioningly upon the religion and church of his fathers, but he could not understand philosophical inquisitiveness in religious matters in any other light than as an immorality. It was a sign not of intellectual life, but of moral death. He shrunk with something akin to disgust from that free spirit of inquiry and discussion which he found in New England.

Alike in contrast were these young men in their views of life. Barton Cathcart's freedom in searching the foundations of religious truth did not seem half so strange to Heywood, as to Cathcart seemed Heywood's utter levity regarding human life and society. From his childhood Barton had looked with the deepest solemnity upon a man's duty to his fellows. Society did not seem to him, as it nearly did to Heywood, a contrivance for his pleasure and aggrandizement. On the contrary, he was oppressed with a sense of duty to society, which tasked him, and, after his utmost industry, still chastised him for negligence.

Barton could not imagine how Heywood could look with such a frivolous eye upon human society, and yet be so conscientious—almost superstitious—about religious forms of thought and worship It seemed to Barton as if Heywood worshipped institutions and cared little for men,—much for the temple, nothing for the worshippers.

In spite of all these differences, these young men became warm friends. Friendship is not the result of reasoning, but of sympathy, and sympathy is a thing too mysterious for solution. Why do some like the smell of sandal wood and others sicken at it? Why is bitter agreeable to some and offensive to others?

Lovers sit in the early ecstasy, saying, Tell me *why* you love me? And then, when every reason is given that fancy can suggest, does not every one know that there is something deeper than all that is told?—that there is in the hidden nature of faculty an attraction of one for another, which, when the conditions are once secured, acts as do the great attractions of the globe, drawing all things together centreward. So it is that people love, not only without the leave of reason, but against all its protests. There is a wisdom of feeling, as well as of thought. Calculation is as often wrong as inspiration. The intuitions of our moral sentiments seldom mislead us. The passions need the rein and curb, but moral sentiments need the spur.

Such differences could not but stir up frequent discussions between these friends. Discussions carried on from day to day began to work their natural effect upon Heywood. Questions began to arise in his mind. Doubts began to hover unbidden over themes before unsullied by the faintest uncertainty. He shrank back from the experience.

"Barton, what's the use of all this disturbance? A fellow had better stick to the religion to which he was educated. I do not think that it is the gentlemanly thing for a man to desert his side. The Church is a good bridge enough for me. If it is not right, it is not likely that I could mend it."

"But what," said Barton, "if the bridge should stop before you reach the farther bank?"

"It will be time enough then," replied Heywood, "to consider what I shall do. But the case is this: here is a river so wide that neither you nor I can see the further bank. It is a turbulent and dangerous water. I see a bridge which has a good and solid abutment on this side. As far as the eye can reach the bridgeway is secure and ample. I propose to try it. You, on the contrary, have a notion that you will row yourself over the stream, and with a skiff and an oar you intend to play ferryman!"

"Your illustration is ingenious at least," said Barton. "Now give me my turn. We are upon an island in the ocean, desiring to return to our homes. Many vessels appear, and offer to take us off. All claim to be safe and efficient. Shall a man use his reason and judgment in determining whether any of them, and, if any, which is safe and trustworthy?"

"There is no end to figures," said Heywood, "you can prove any thing and disprove any thing by ingenious illustrations. I've seen many a jury led to the very deuce by a lawyer skilful in metaphors and similes, although the facts and the law were against his case. But the fact is, Barton, I am no Yankee. I am not troubled with that intolerable curiosity which puts your people upon prying into every thing in creation. If the good Lord wants to keep any thing secret, I can't imagine what he created Yankees for! They are the most restlessly inquisitive creatures—always fretting themselves to find out something that was hidden away on purpose. If Nature has a secret, a Yankee, I'll be bound, will pick the lock where it is kept, or be eaves-dropping, till he gets hold of it. The fact is, there is too much brain here in New England. Every body is racing and chasing after causes. I believe your people think they have the responsibility of the universe on their shoulders. When the Bible said, 'Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?' there were no Yankees about. Since then, five hundred ministers in this very New England think they have done it! They have found God out—all that He has done, why He did it, what He has not done, and why He could not do it! Did you hear that young sprout preach, last Sunday afternoon, fresh from New Haven? He was amazingly precocious. He went on glibly unfolding moral government. 'God *must* do this,' and, 'God, from the nature of things, *cannot* do that.' There was not a thing about the Infinite and Eternal which he did not fancy himself entirely familiar with! Pah! I hate so much disturbance. A gentleman wants a decorous faith, a good, plain, sensible worship; and then, with a good conscience, he turns to the enjoyment of life, leaving to the Deity and—excuse me!—to the Yankees the management of unfathomable mysteries."

Barton could not help laughing at Heywood's banter, extravagant as it seemed.

"Well, Heywood," said he, "I admit that there is something of the Greek in the Yankee nature. Dr. Wentworth says that the New England mind is a threefold cross—it has the moral nature of the Jew, the intellectual spirit of the Greek, and the practical tendencies of the Roman."

"Indeed! Did he say whence they derived the element of modesty? Only three nations spoiled to make this marvellous New England? That cannot account for the riches which abound! Let me see—ingenuity from Egypt, humility from China, bravery —well, that must be indigenous, it is of a peculiar kind."

"That will do, Heywood! that will do. You have given easons enough already, why Virginia should send her daughters to New England for education and her sons for wives! The State that yields the best schools and finest women ranks highest."

It might be supposed that on a subject so all-engrossing as politics had become in the spring and summer of 1860, two young men like Cathcart and Heywood would find themselves often in collision. But Heywood had not adopted the extreme views that had prevailed in the South on the subject of slavery. He regarded the institution as a misfortune. But he apologized for it, as a thing entailed upon the South, and for which no present remedy could be found. Though Heywood deemed it prudent to abstain from an active part in politics, yet it was plain he did not care to have it concealed that his sympathy was with his Southern kindred. By a sort of understanding, at length, Tom Heywood and Cathcart avoided all discussions on current topics. But when did two clouds oppositely charged ever come together without drawing each other's lightning? Then comes the thunder-crash; afterward it clears up, and for days the air will be purer. But such clashes between friends are safer in almost any other matter than politics. In spite of every effort, they found themselves less intimate, less affectionate and confiding. Other causes also tended and tempted to more alienation.

Heywood's aunt had secretly determined to spare no pains to bring about a connection between Rose Wentworth and young Heywood. In the first place, she deemed the connection one eminently fit to be made. They seemed suited to each other. Was he not a fine fellow, handsome, of gentlemanly manners, of good disposition, of good family and connections? Was not Rose of noble presence, most comely, a woman of genius, yet of rare domestic qualities, of great culture, trained to observation, and withal free from pedantry? What more could be wanting?

Nothing except the consent of the parties. Match-making is an art so fascinating that it is no wonder that people become addicted to it. Love in young people is of itself one of the most charming spectacles in human life. To see the spark struck, the fire kindled, its first faint flame spreading, and finally the full glow and warmth established, and then to be able to say complacently, "I did it," is not all this inducement and reward enough to tempt amiable souls to this species of benevolence?

Aunt Chandler was no match-maker. This she often said. But she had no objection occasionally to give good advice. She was of that honest and plain-speaking way that inspired confidence. She was shrewd and prudent. She was really unselfish. She had no daughters of her own. With a great motherly heart, she had no children. With great skill in management, she had nobody to manage. It was quite natural when young people came to her for advice, she should give it. Having given advice, it was natural that she should be interested in seeing what became of it. But she was not a match-maker! That she disapproved of. It was a responsibility that no one should take. "No one could tell after all how a match might turn out; and if badly, one could never forgive one's self for having brought it about."

There was a great difference, she pleased herself with thinking, between match-making and a mere influencing one to make one's own match. Suggestion, reasonable influence and suitable advice did not amount to match-making.

She beheld these two young persons, Heywood and Rose Wentworth, and saw what from inexperience they might have failed to perceive, that they were "just made for each other."

She made various occasions of meeting at her house, and in her grounds—"no party, a mere gathering of neighbors in the most familiar way;" teas and door-yard picnics—all in a manner so natural and accidental, that she could not forbear to admire the fortunate happenings of things. When people of sagacity set on foot plans with foresight, if they are of a devout turn of mind, they often see the hand of Providence wonderfully stretched out in their behalf. When Mrs. Chandler had sent some rare old books of prints over to Dr. Wentworth, had heaped up Mrs. Wentworth's table with fruit, apologizing that their grounds produced so much more than they could use that it was a kindness if the neighbors would help her to use it, it was natural that the doctor's family should all come over, without formality, to spend an evening, and just as natural that Mrs. Chandler and her husband should return the visit. And when, after the elderly people were seated in a manner evidently studied for their pleasure, and Rose and Heywood had the two only places left, and were obliged accidentally to bear each other company, and seemed content to do so, Mrs. Chandler, looking down upon them with benevolent eyes, could not refrain a pious and grateful ejaculation: "How providential this is! If I had had the ordering of it myself, the Lord could not have pleased me better!" The more she thought about it the more Providence seemed to smile. The more Providence favored it the more Mrs. Chandler smiled. It was so easy for her to act with sagacity that she did not see herself in many events which fell out, and fell out of her hand.

Weeks and months passed. The young people were happy; the old people were happy. It seemed strange, however, that Heywood had never spoken a word to his aunt of his intentions. In imagination, she had seen the happy pair coming to thank her, she had helped to arrange the bridal party, she had seen the ceremony, she had been to church on the first Sunday after their return from the bridal trip, and she had drank in great draughts of satisfaction at the admiration with which all the congregation looked on the beautiful couple; she had walked home behind them and observed with rare relish those tender ways of first-blossoming love, which discover newly-married people as surely as a bed of mignonnette—simple as it looks—is detected by its odor. But, pleasing as are the pictures of imagination, a practical mind needs something less spiritual and more substantial. Why did not Heywood make some progress? Did not Rose please him? Or was there some impediment? It was plain that no visible progress was made. Therefore, though averse to match-making, it was proper that Mrs. Chandler should take observations and find out the latitude and longitude of affairs.

Could it be that Heywood was already engaged in Virginia? The thought was startling. His aunt did not wait long for a providential opening; but, on Heywood's return from an excursion fell into conversation with him.

"Have you had a pleasant time, Heywood? of course you have.

I can see by your face. When I was young, they did not have as many rides and picnics as they do now; though I fancy the young women then were more sedate, less frivolous and pleasure-seeking than now."

"Bless me, aunt, I do not know what you would call propriety if the Norwood girls are not proper! I wish you might see some of our highflyers in the South!"

"I suppose you naturally would prefer the society of Southern young ladies?"

"I don't know about that; of course I like my own folks."

"Well, suppose you were going to settle down in life, and wanted to choose a wife—for I take it for granted that you are not engaged—are you?"

"No, aunt, I am too young for that, or, at any rate, not yet quite ready to settle down. Besides, no man marries till his time comes. I am waiting till I see some one that is irresistible."

"Do you expect some one to charge upon you and whirl you away captive?"

"No, not exactly that; but one likes shy game and fish not easily landed. I see persons good enough, doubtless—perhaps too good for me; yet, after all, one does not like to know before he takes a step just how it will all end."

"Upon my word, Heywood, this is superlatively modest! I did not think that you were one of those conceited dandies that thought every woman who looked at him was in love with him. But I can tell you in good earnest, sir, that those who are most worthy when won are not the easiest to win."

"Aunt, I mean no offence to the sex, and none to you especially. You asked me a plain question, and I gave you a plain answer."

"Of the young ladies, sir malapert, whom you have laid under obligation this afternoon with your charming presence, how many of them do you believe that you could have for the asking?"

"Every one of them. This sounds conceited to you, aunt, but I look at it in this way: I know that I am a presentable youn gentleman, with reasonably good prospects. I cannot deny the sight of my eyes that my presence is agreeable to the young ladies. I take it for granted that they all expect to enter the matrimonial state whenever a suitable offer is made; and it does not seem con ceited at all to imagine that a lady who receives your addresses with marked favor would accept your offer, should you press a suit."

"You were never more mistaken in your life. I will instance but a single one—Rose Wentworth. I wish with all my heart that you might win her; but it will not be done just by the asking, let me tell you."

"Why, there was not one of the party so cordial and frank. I went home with her, and she seemed a good deal softened and sentimental. She talked of trees and flowers, and of the spirit and of an inner life. I think I understand such things. If I had just said the word, I fully believe that I should now be asking your approbation to our union."

"This passes all belief! I lose faith in you, at least in your good judgment. You have no more conception of Rose Wentworth than you have of those who live in the stars. If you had presumed upon her cordial ways and mentioned love, I should like to have stood by and seen her large eyes flash upon you."

"Why, aunt, do you think she is such a paragon?"

"I do—I do. She is beyond all words the noblest young woman that I have ever known. But what she is no one can know, nor she herself, until something rouses her. She is capable of rising into grandeur if circumstances favored. If by the wisest and most skilful wooing you could win Rose, you would be the happiest of living men; and twenty years hence you would find your happiness but just begun!"

"Why, aunt, you rather pique my curiosity. If you really think that she is so hard to win, I am almost disposed to try it."

"Young man," said Mrs. Chandler, almost sternly, "you may as well let it alone as to try in that spirit."

And the subject was dropped.

Some influences are like spurs, and striking into the sides they produce instant motion. Others are seeds, and when sown seem utterly lost; yet in silence and darkness they are germinating and growing. Mrs. Chandler said no more, but she thought a good deal more.

"I don't believe things will rest as they are. I think Heywood has received some notions that will work in him. But what if Rose should not take a fancy to him? Of course she likes him;

but that does not mean any thing in particular. She is a world too kind and generous, and likes every body, and Heywood has been fooled by it. He thinks that kindness is love. That's just like a man! But then he has all his life been run after and praised, poor fellow. He is to be pitied, not blamed."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VARIETIES.

Nothing enhances the value of an object more than to know that others value it and are competing for it. Mrs. Chandler furnished both stimulants to Heywood. I cannot say how she obtained the information, but she had been led to believe that Barton Cathcart had directed his attentions toward Miss Wentworth. Some such stories had risen and died out in the village. The signs all failed. Mrs. Chandler, perhaps, had not even heard of them One day, however, she returned home after a visit to Dr. Wentworth's, and in consequence of information—what, I never knew—she said to her husband, by the merest accident, in Heywood's presence

" Would it not be strange, my dear, if Barton Cathcart should marry Rose Wentworth ? "

Her husband looked at her with simplicity, and said:

" I suppose so."

" Do you think it would be a good match ? "

" I don't see any objection, provided the parties are willing."

" But really, my dear, I can't hardly imagine that Rose should prefer such a man, unless it was her only chance. But then you can never tell. Getting in love is like picking garden flowers in the night. You may get a violet, or you may pick a nettle. It seems to me that Rose might do better than to take Cathcart."

Tom Heywood thought it worth his while to take a more close survey of the ground. He had been under the impression for some time that he had gone as far as it was safe to go unless he were willing to go further; that Rose was very susceptible and simple; and that, as a man of honor, it was his duty, having a far better knowledge of life and especially of affairs of the heart, to see to it that she was not harmed.

He was so far influenced by his aunt's remarks from time to time that he was determined at any rate to probe the matter, and to see just how things really were. His visits became more frequent, and his attentions were assiduous He exerted himself in conversation, he went through the usual musical routine on such occasions, and after a considerable period he found himself in just the same place as at the beginning. It was a new experience, and piqued his pride. He began to perceive some zest in this pursuit. On the whole, he was glad that Miss Wentworth had not dropped into his hands as easily as he at first feared. He was satisfied that Miss Rose was genuine; that there was no artfulness; that she was playing no part.

He absented himself for a time, but at his next visit his absence excited no remark. He discussed the ladies of Norwood, and expressed admiration for one or two in particular. He found Miss Rose the most generous of critics and the most discriminating of friends. Thus far Miss Wentworth had been to him an inferior, in the sense that a beautiful child is to an elder brother. He began to admit now that she was his equal, and to experience a respect which he had never felt before for a pretty woman. He now read favorite authors aloud, and indulged in criticisms. He discussed various questions in literature, in art, in science. If Heywood chose to talk of gay trifles, so did she. Just as naturally and unaffectedly did she follow and accompany him if music or painting were the theme. If he introduced a discussion, Rose entered with zest, but never with heat, into philosophical reasonings, and in matters of natural science proved herself far better informed than was Heywood. He could not deny that a more intimate acquaintance raised his opinion of Miss Wentworth. Indeed he began to admit to himself that she was a woman worthy of pursuit! But he made no progress. He was as near and just as far from her after weeks and months had passed, as at the beginning. He could not understand it. He watched to discover the exquisite art, the subtle fence, by which he was warded off. Nothing could be discovered but simple, artless, straightforward conduct.

It would not be just to leave the impression that Heywood's pride alone, or chiefly, had wrought in him a determination to press his suit to an issue. At every step he found warmer sentiments kindling. Admiration had passed on a stage, and began to take on the colors of love. Love, once entertained, throve; and with a genuine affection there came a great change over him, and for the better. A deep and true love is full of humility and gratitude. Heywood dropped that ill-fitting conceit which veiled his real goodness, and his overweening confidence in himself gave way to diffidence. Once or twice, arming himself with a determination to bring his fate to an issue, he found himself, he knew not how, carried away from his purpose, and as far from success as ever.

At last he determined that, with whatever abruptness it was necessary, he would make known to Rose his sentiments, and, at least, know whether or not he was to be blessed.

There was to be the weekly gathering at Dr. Wentworth's on the morrow. The house and grounds lay open to all family friends. No formality prevailed. Every one was left to come and go with perfect freedom. One might be sure of seeing Judge Bacon there, and Mr. Edwards, and almost always Parson Buell, and Mr. Brett, and Mrs. Chandler, and occasionally Mr. Chandler, and once in a while 'Biah Cathcart and his wife. Alice came every week, and Barton was there at least to take tea. Besides these regulars, there was a militia of visitors, or the friends of friends, so that on pleasant days, sometimes two or three score of people roamed about the grounds, in knots and circles; the young people securing their own company, and the elder people discoursing apart. or joining the young folks, as it chanced to please them. It is in such circumstances that love finds its fairest opportunities. A thousand chances turn up for a look, a word with an emphasis, or for a passing sentence, and if both parties be in sympathy, it is surprising to see by how many accidents they are favored. They are sent on some errand, one to help the other; or they are left alone, every person about them having the most natural reasons in the world for going off. The very sun seems to wink at them through the blinking leaves. The shadows that gather about them serve as a protecting screen. Every thing favors fortunate love! No one knew the advantages of such circumstances better than Heywood. No one had less art to discern opportunity than Cathcart.

On the appointed morrow, therefore, Heywood, with a charming grace, passed from group to group, and not a person in the grounds was there who did not feel that Heywood had paid them most agreeable personal attention. Certainly Alice Cathcart thought so with reason. Heywood took his place by her side, and either he found her in her happiest mood, or had the art to draw forth her hidden power: for Alice fairly blossomed. Rose who knew what treasure lay hidden deep within, was delighted to have others perceive it. Barton had never seen his sister so radiant, and exhibit such force of conversation. She met Heywood's compliments and threw them back as a mirror throws back the sunlight that falls upon it; and when, in an encounter of wit that followed, Alice fairly vanquished him, Heywood, plucking a wreath of the honeysuckle vine, and twining in it a spray or two of crimson fuchsias, with fine manner offered to crown her, saying, with a humorous modesty: "The Muses are to be crowned, not contended with."

All clapped and cried bravo! bravo! and no one seemed so radiantly happy as Rose, except Alice herself. She seemed strangely brilliant; and when the beautiful, glossy green leaves, and the glowing colors of the fuchsia were laid upon her raven hair, Heywood called all to witness how much she resembled Raphael's picture of "*Poesie.*"

Dr. Wentworth and his friends repaired to the old drooping elm. Soon they fell into conversation. I know not how the subject of cathedrals came up, but Dr. Wentworth called to Rose:

"My child, bring me two or three volumes of Britton's Cathedrals of England. Perhaps some of these nimble gentlemen will help you."

Heywood was standing by Alice, though listening to every thing that concerned Rose. He would have sprung to fulfil the intimation, but at that moment Alice was addressing a question to him. Barton Cathcart quietly moved toward the house, and repairing to the library, brought out the volumes. One of them was opened to the ground plan of York Minster, and laid upon the grass.

"Sit down by me, disciple," said Judge Bacon to Cathcart, "and hear Dr. Wentworth make a plea in behalf of idolatry."

"The unassisted reason of man must derive its notion of Divinities either from the material world, or from man himself. I suspect that much of what we have been taught to regard as a stupid idolatry was regarded, in its time, by intelligent worshippers, only as a kind of symbolism. Trees were supposed to *contain* deities. Fire was the element through which gods manifested themselves. If I had lived before the days of Revelation I should have worshipped the Sun, or Trees."

"On such a day as this, Doctor," said Bacon, "I think you would be glad to run under your tree-god to get rid of your sun-god. But I suppose you would divide the year between them, and say prayers to the sun in winter, and to the trees in summer."

"You were speaking of cathedrals and the origin of Gothic architecture," said Edwards.

"Yes, I was reprobating the idea that Gothic architecture was in any sense an imitation of trees. There is some analogy, however, between the impression made upon the mind by a forest and by a cathedral. There is the same sense of solitary grandeur, the same peculiar feeling of solemn mystery arising from vast height, a similar play of light and shade, and a spirit of devotion which I think is spontaneous and inevitable in both."

"Father, were you as much affected by the first cathedral that you saw as you expected to be?" asked Rose, who had placed a stool near her father, and left Alice on the outer part of the circle attended by Heywood.

"I really had expected but little. It was neither taste nor devotion that first drew me to York Minster. It was curiosity. But I was overwhelmed with wonder. The mystery and awe produced by height and vastness in the interior I can compare to nothing but the feeling which one has who, either by day, or in a starlit night, lies alone in the fields on his back, looking long right up into the heavens, which seem slowly to open, deeper and more deep, until, with strange presentiment, one almost feels that he is drawing near to the Eternal City! By some subtle sympathy, one's spirit swells and is conscious of wonderful elevation. It is a consciousness of superiority, dignity, grandeur. The same thing befell me on the first time that I stood at Niagara. I found myself stepping proudly, like a conqueror, and moving with the dignity of a prince. But in a cathedral-experience this is tempered by certain other influences, which inspire tenderness and sadness. Now if upon this state of mind there arises a solemn chant, borne upon the waves of organ music, especially if one is in a foreign land, touched a little with homesickness, and hears those sacred psalms which are laden with the most solemn and tender associations of his life, coming back to him in such a bewildering place, fringed with murmuring echoes, is it strange that the spirit seems to drop the body, and to hover, in its full glorious liberty, on the bounds of the Infinite and the Eternal?"

Judge Bacon watched the Doctor, as he proceeded, with a smile, whether of sympathy or of incredulity one could not well divine. Neither did his words make his real thoughts any clearer. He was so used to a bantering irony that he often employed it when, at heart, he was in full sympathy with the person against whom it was directed.

"I confess, Doctor," said he with mock sadness, "that I have never felt this sense of leaving the body and rising into a beatific condition, except in one set of circumstances."

"What were they?" asked Wentworth, with some slight surprise.

"When I have been in the act of falling asleep in church, under the refreshing influence of a long and sound discourse?"

"You are not a frequent sleeper, Judge, according to my observations," said Parson Buell. "Indeed I have regarded you as one of the wakeful and watching."

"Ah, that is the minister's fault. Instead of the absurd method now pursued of doctrinal examination, if I were set to select clergymen, I should pick and determine by their somniferousness. I would settle the man that yielded sleep, and turn away every candidate that kept me awake. A minister should be a true Pulpit Poppy! But go on, Doctor, as your remarks were not half an hour long, I know that you had but just entered on the topic of cathedrals."

"The cathedral is really a symbol of Christianity, complex, multitudinous, sublime! It was not enough for men to make the cross the symbol of their faith, to wear it on the person, to affix it to churches, to shape utensils to its form, to fashion the very doors and windows so that they should frame to the eye the figure of the cross; but some bold man determined that the cross should be reared in proportions so vast that a Christian assembly could worship, not before it, but within it. Look upon this ground plan. It is a noble cross. A cathedral stript of its accessories is but a sublime cross, subsidizing to itself the resources of society. The gorgeous windows, the elaborate ornaments, the exquisite carvings of men, beasts and foliage, silently represent the homage which art, man, and nature, pay to the cross. Symbolism can go no further. Every city of England has lying in tranquil grandeur within it an architectural cross. Not that one which glows upon the spire like the morning and the evening star; nor those which stand at the altar, or are wrought in colors upon the windows, but in the foundations themselves! All the rough and hidden stones have for hundreds of years lain in the silent and invisible fashions of the cross, upon whose pattern rises—glowing more and more with beauty and art—every wall, and the mighty whole The cross is thus the root of architecture!"

"For once, I must say, bravo! Your notions have some plausibleness, though little originality," said Judge Bacon; "and I can well imagine how a thousand men shut up in a stone cross, on oak benches, and obliged to listen, as we are, to prolix discourse, might think it a kind of crucifixion."

"Oh, Judge, if I could once see you fairly taken off your feet with enthusiasm, as I was at Winchester, I would willingly suffer all your jibes for the rest of my life."

"How was that, father? Do tell us," said Rose, who had changed her place to give Alice a nearer seat, placing herself in such a way that Heywood was no longer facing her.

"The day had been warm, like this, though a month earlier, it being in July. The afternoon was well advanced, and the sun was sunk so low that it poured its light through the exhalations rising from the ground—very much as the sun is now doing," said the doctor, turning toward the west. "See how these evergreens seem fairly banked up against a very cloud of light! Well, I had little idea of the interior of Winchester Cathedral, and the exterior was not as impressive as several others. But as I entered the west door, the nave clear up to the ceiling seemed to blaze with light. The construction stone is pale yellow, almost white, and the red light of this afternoon gave it a peculiar charm. Unlike other cathedrals, there were no dark spaces, no mysterious recesses, nothing dim or solemn. All was radiant and glorious. It was not Mystery and Awe, but Revelation and Joy, that were symbolized! To complete the enchantment, the organ was filling the vast space with rich harmonies."

Judge Bacon, who had been looking toward the haze of golden light, turned round with an impressive gesture.

"My dear Doctor, if one could only go to meeting in a cathe dral, what joy would it be! Especially for children, what a godsend under a dull sermon. Now what can children do in church? The sermon they can't understand. They are not allowed to sleep; they are too tired to sit up, and are not allowed to lie down. Cry they can't, and laugh they must not. I used slyly to make rabbits with my handkerchief. But a cathedral affords boundless amusement for the eyes. While a prosaic passage was droning in my ears, I could busy myself in tracing the colors in the windows, making out the ridiculous old saints, or recalling the amusing legends. If the discourse ran on doctrine—the veritable act of giving a stone to those who want bread—I could study the curious carvings—stone foliage, stone dragons, stone beasts, in all their varieties! Look here, Doctor,—I believe that cathedrals would convert me! What a pity that we have none! One of the benefits which I anticipate from the spread of Romanism in America is the introduction of the Roman Civil Law and of cathedrals to put to shame the plainness of meeting-houses, and also to ally religion with taste!"

"You might as well sigh for barons' castles, princes, palaces, Roman forums, Greek temples, Egyptian pyramids. Men forget that all institutions, customs, schools of painting, special forms of architecture, are the outworking of the inward spirit of an Age. When that spirit changes, or dies out, it is in vain to attempt to reproduce its mere forms again, except as dead memorials. Cathedrals had their epoch. They represent a geologic period, as it were, in the moral world. We might as well attempt to bring back ancient manuscripts with their splendid illuminations, instead of printed books; or to re-introduce the armor and armies of the Middle Ages, instead of rifles and artillery. It is this very blunder that they commit who attempt to reproduce the art-spirit of a period long gone by, by copying its dead forms. If it was good for any thing in its own time, that is the very reason why it will be out of place in our time."

"For gracious' sake, Doctor, pause! What have we done to deserve such a discourse? Bethink you! It is not Sunday! A gentleman in Boston sent his Irish servant to his wine cellar to draw from a cask of choice Madeira a specimen glass. The servant forgot to turn the faucet, and all night the stream trickled—ran—trickled, until not a drop was left."

"Well, Judge, what then?"

"Sure enough, I begin to see that the case will not apply to you; for the cask *did* at length run dry, and stop. You run dry enough, but never stop. But, at the risk of starting you off again, I cannot help saying that, after such a sentimental description as you gave of the effects of a cathedral on *you*, to follow on with the statement that cathedrals have no longer any function—are dead—mere mighty museums, is peculiarly refreshing to a logical mind!"

"Both things are true, nevertheless. I was speaking of old cathedrals, in whose presence a thousand years rise up in dim procession, whose very strangeness stirs the imagination, in which lie buried kings and prelates whose doings filled their own age and gave color to history,—to walk in them is like a vision of the Resurrection! Generations long gone, with passions like ours, but with ideas foreign and strange, rise before you. While the trance is upon you, if the organ sounds and the choir chant, you seem to stand with the exceeding great multitude of past ages, and the imagination, that flies free through all time and space, gathers about you the good and great of ten centuries, and you are one of an invisible multitude which no man can number, of every age, and all tongues, lifting up a common praise to God! Your own heart, for the moment, seems to express a devotion as wide as creation, and to be the instrument by which generations are praising God! You can reproduce a stone cathedral in our day, but can you clothe it with five hundred or a thousand years? A clean, new cathedral, in America, is a solecism. It is not in harmony with our wants, our ideas, or our sympathies. It is a huge and bungling imitation, and counterfeit. It is a forgery upon Time. Even old cathedrals have lost their power upon those familiar with them. Use deadens romance. They are for pilgrims,—far-comers,—not for the resident inhabitants. For a few, of romantic tendency, they may retain their influence ever fresh, but for the mass of men they no longer have any message. The common people have gone on and left these magnificent monuments of the sincerity of a strong but rude age to poets and antiquarians!"

"Religion seems to have had a hard time in this world. It is so busy with its institutions, its governments, its doctrines and orders that it has little time to bestow on *men*."

"That is more true than you meant. But it is not true of religion more than of justice, of beauty, of every organized principle."

"You are right for once, Doctor," said Judge Bacon. "The law is an analogous case in point. We go back with great interest and profit to the Roman law and to the common law of England. But, if the common law of England as it was three hundred years ago, or if Justinian's code were to be introduced bodily into modern courts, they would be in incessant conflict with society in all its interests."

Dr. Wentworth resumed:

"Cathedrals and liturgies, after losing their original force and function, derive a secondary value as a connecting medium between remote periods and ages. Their associations are like mistletoe on aged trees, which have a value which the trees do not. The attempt to create a modern liturgy is evidence of how little men understand the law of growth. Liturgies of power are those which have in them the voice of ages. It is the breath of the whole church that breathes through them. To forsake these, and to make modern liturgies is as if a man should cut down from about his mansion the oaks and elms that had grown majestic through hundreds of years, and then attempt to imitate their shade and grandeur by setting out starveling Lombardy poplars."

"But," said Judge Bacon, "you ought to admit that a Puritan cathedral would be proper. Its structure might be new, but its spirit, which according to you is the essential thing, would be old enough. It would be far older than Justinian. It would be as old as Moses. The Puritans were men of the Old Testament more than of the New. Their writings breathe its spirit, employ its language; and their laws sought to imitate the old Hebrew code, and in some instances the Levitical laws are ludicrously woven into the old colony legislation."

"It will always be so," responded Dr. Wentworth, accepting the new direction thus suggested for the conversation, "with men in a minority, suffering persecution for a good cause. They will take to the Old Testament as patriots do to the mountains when oppressors harry the land. The reason is obvious. The old prophets were grand figures, standing almost alone against a background of cruelty and corruption, both in faith and morals. Their experience breathes in the psalms, and in the major and minor prophets. No mistake is greater than to suppose that the Books of Prophecy are filled with prophesying, or that the special predictions constitute the chief value of these undying Scriptures. They are the heart journals of great men, almost alone, waging war with every form of civil and social iniquity. They reveal all the shades of fear, doubt, despondency, incident to moral conflict. They reveal Suffering and Consolation as no drama ever did. The great truths of Natural Justice; the absolute faith that the world was organized for righteousness, and that iniquity is sure to be a losing game; that the Invisible Power, who sits silent behind the clouds while every thing seems to overwhelm the good and promote the bad, is nevertheless awake, aroused and terribly in earnest for truth and justice; and that he seems remiss only because Jehovah works in larger circles than those in which men work, and brings events to their account and judgment a little later and lower down than men desire and expect. These are those elements of the prophetic books that will always make them the refuge of the oppressed. But the Puritan, if he went to the Old Testament for consolation and strength, certainly did not find there the peculiar intellectual elements which marked him. The intellectual contrast between the Hebrew and the Puritan is as great as that between Jerusalem and Athens. The Hebrew was neither an analyst nor a reasoner; the Puritan was both. Emotion is the staple of Hebrew thought. His very reasonings were swells of moral feeling. In Judea it was feeling that fed thought; in New England it is thought that produces feeling."

"You mean that ought to do it," said the Judge. "I wish in my soul it did! It was a poor exchange that the Puritan made when he bargained off imagination for logic, emotion for metaphysics, moral consciousness for proof. A genuine Yankee Puritan thinks that he can prove any thing. He would address an argument to each letter of the alphabet, proving that A is A, that B is B. He would delight to hear somebody doubt the multiplication table, that he might prove it. I am tired of logic, and argument, and doctrine, and discussion. The fact is, Doctor, that since Heywood has been in town, I have taken to the Episcopal Church, where every thing is cut and dried, and the service is so long that the sermon has to be short. I have serious thoughts of joining."

"I am glad, Judge, to learn that you have serious thought about any thing religious. The New England theologians have not been poetic, Edwards, perhaps, excepted; and he soon repressed a genius which, under other culture, would have placed him among the immortal few. Curiously enough, they have undervalued the imagination, and sought to replace it with solid reasonings. I must admit that, at some period, they have had an almost pharisaic pride of logic and pure metaphysics. But in spite of their exclusion of the literary forms of the imagination, they have dealt with great moral truths in such a manner that the imagination of their people has been powerfully developed. The impression that New England men are practical and shrewd, but not imaginative or æsthetic, has arisen from the fact that peculiar influences prevented the development of imagination in the direction of poetry, and music, or of the fine arts. Puritan influences shut up in a measure these channels. Imagination followed the lines of speculation. Instead of forming itself into sound and physical forms, it inspired systems of thought. The poems of Dante are not more complete pictures than are the sermons of Edwards, if you drop from both the instrument of language, and compare simply the picture which is left in the mind. The vast realm of thought traversed by New England theology, involving the philosophy of the human mind, the nature of moral government, and so, by corollary, of human governments—the profound inquiries into cause and effect,—the invisible sphere of the will,—the relations of character to future condition,—the Future itself, its eternal sovereign, its antithetic kingdom, like night over against the day,—and the pressure of thought toward infinite and insoluble problems might have been expected to give a very unpractical result. In fact, however, it led to immense fertility and to a practical wisdom.

"In a greater extent, probably, than ever before was the whole population, for two hundred years, educated to receive a copious, minute and immense system of truth, without any symbols, without old superstitions, without any thing for the eye or ear, sustained purely by the exercise of reason, and in directions where the reason depended largely upon the imagination. In other lands, the popular faith rested upon an order of men lifted into splendid authority The New England clergyman was a plain citizen, utterly disdain ing all trappings. Elsewhere, cathedrals, festive days, and gorgeous ceremonies sustained men's belief. It is hardly possible to make barrenness more bare of all appliances for the senses than was New England. Yet there arose in the popular mind a vast and stately system of truth, covering two worlds."

"Take breath, Doctor, let us see! Elm trees, cathedrals, pre-Raphaelitism, the Old and New Testament, the Puritan, New England clergymen, and New England theology! I put it to you, as a humane and honest physician, whether there are not too many medicines for one bolus? You are a perfect old Druid, and sit under your tree as if the chief end of man was to talk and hear talking! By the way, your elm tree ought to be an oak—that is the tree of piety and wisdom."

"By no means. The oak is the English tree. But the elm is the American tree."

"I suspect you are led astray this time, Doctor," said Judge Bacon, "because you own so wonderful a tree. Every body praises his own. The pine tree is the symbol of New England. It is the tree of liberty, flourishing as liberty always has, among the hills and mountains—tough and hardy, deriving nourishment from the poorest soils and enduring the severest winters, without losing its foliage, fighting winter storms with its banner all unfolded! The only tree fit to represent our liberty-loving people is the one that is as green in winter as in summer. There! what do you say to that as a specimen of discourse in your own vein?"

"It is thoroughly well said," replied Wentworth, "and if we were at liberty now to select the tree of Liberty, undoubtedly that would be it. But it has been done for us. The elm is historic. It is identified not only with American ideas and men, but with the great struggles of liberty. The Pittsfield elm, now a mere wreck, was a rallying point in our Revolution, as it had been before among the aborigines. What shall we say of the elms in Springfield, in Hadley, in Hatfield, which have played a part in colonial history? And what of that famous Boston Common Elm, which is to Massachusetts what the Charter Oak was to Connecticut?"

"Stop—stop. Now you are on my ground. The elm on the Boston Common was not the Charter Oak of Massachusetts. It was another elm tree which you have probably forgotten. I mean the old elm that stood on the corner of Essex and Medway streets in Boston, now Essex and Washington streets. Planted in 1646, it was more than a hundred years old when the pre-revolutionary excitements were taking place in Boston. I don't believe there was ever a city in the world where the men in authority had such hard work in putting a yoke on its people, as Boston. It was always a famous talking place. I can imagine a governor's opinion of such men as Sam Adams and old John Adams and their set. Let me see—didn't you come from Boston, Doctor? Well, no matter. One bright morning, when the sun rose, a marvel appeared. In the night the dew, or Puck, had shaped in golden letters and nailed with a spike upon the elm, '*Tree of Liberty.*' The offence was remembered, and in 1775 the British soldiers cut down the dangerous tree."

"Thank you, Judge. If any tree should be adopted as the national symbol, it is the American elm—the historic '*Tree of Liberty.*'"

"I forgot to say," said the Judge, with a knowing look, "what every true Yankee will be delighted to learn, that the tree cut up into fourteen cords of wood! Only imagine what a fortune that would be, if all this were to-day in the hands of some honest farmer. He would fill the land with souvenirs, and make his fortune to boot. For we should have the miracle of the oil and meal over again. The wood would never give out. It would grow on his hands faster than ever it did on its own roots."

"We are agreed, then, the elm is the Tree of Liberty. It is the National Tree!"

The sun went down. Pete Sawmill was busy passing from the kitchen to the table, spread in an adjoining space among evergreen trees. The company broke up and repaired thither for tea. Seats were arranged in nooks and coverts, among the shrubbery, and friends formed into groups here and there, in the most unconstrained liberty. Rose flitted hither and thither with hospitable attentions, seeming to take no part for herself except the pleasure of serving. So Heywood found to his chagrin. An evil fate hampered him all the evening. Nothing fell out fortunately; and he returned home under a cloud. Alice remained for the night.

"Why, Alice," said Rose, when they had repaired to their rooms, "what a woman of society you have become! You used to admire my freedom in company. It is now my turn to envy you. I never saw you so brilliant."

Alice smiled. Yet the expression of her face was not altogether of pleasure. As clouds coming and going, in a bright moonlight evening, seem to shade or brighten the lawn, so in alternation pleasing thoughts and sad ones cast their reflections upon Alice's face.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

NUTTING—ITS JOYS AND DISASTERS.

When Autumn days come, Nature, like a retired merchant changes its manner—from thrift and bustling industry to languid leisure and to ostentatious luxury. The sun rises later and sets earlier than when it had all the summer crops on hand and was playing universal husbandman. There is no nest-building now, and no bird-singing,—which is a purely domestic arrangement, designed on the birds' part to keep peace in the family while the children are being raised, and laid aside as soon as the young birds are off their hands. Mornings come fleeced in mists, which hang over streams and low, moist places. The sun plays with them, but they perish in his arms. A few belated flowers yet keep watch, but chiefly the asters, which fringe the fields, star the edges of forests, and, like a late-comer at a feast, seem bent upon making up lost time. At night, crickets and katy-dids scrape their shrill viols, and fill the air with stridulous music. Over all the shrinking fields, the trees lift up their gorgeous foliage, and, like those who wait for the marriage-bell and the bridegroom, they shine out in glorious apparel.

The hills, forest-clad, are become the Lord's younger sons, and, like Joseph, they are dressed in a coat of many colors. October days, short between horizons, reach higher into the vault than any days of the year; and through them the season seems to look with softened sadness, as one who, in the calm of age, meditates on all the mistakes of his past life and solemnly thinks upon the advancing future. Along the fence rows, where seeds and late berries may be found, birds hop silently, as if ashamed to be seen. Soon they will change their solitary ways and collect in flocks. To-day, the fields will swarm with them; to-morrow, there will not be one left, and they will be picking their food many degrees of latitude south.

In the gay sadness of autumn, Barton Cathcart, now released from his school, wandered about with his gun. Sometimes he brought home from the hills his bag full of squirrels, and sometimes from the bosky coverts he secured many brace of partridges. At other times, he wandered all day without once firing his gun.

Barton loved field sports, yet not so keenly that he chased through the woods and coverts without observation. He stopped to trace the lines of lichen on stones, or the exquisite mosses in damp and shaded nooks. Many squirrels ran and hid while he stood under the yellow-leaved nut trees admiring the russet hickories, the brilliant maples, scarlet, pink and yellow. He remembered what Dr. Wentworth had said of cathedrals, and stretched on a dry knoll, he sometimes lay for a long time looking up into the arched trees, tracing imaginary groinings, or listening to the low sounds of the winds that chanted through the trees, and cast down to the ground multitudes of yellow leaves, on which they had just been playing. So silent and so immovable did he lie, and so long, that the squirrels forgot to be shy, descended to the ground and played their nimble pranks before him, or sprung from branch to branch overhead, barking and chattering in full security. Ah, these great October days!—October woods!—October musings!

It was his purpose, in November, to repair to Cambridge to attend a course of lectures upon law.

Meanwhile, he was at home again,—living over, as in a gentle trance, the scenes of his boyhood, visiting the haunts which his early experience had made dear to him. He recalled the frolics which Rose and Alice had so often had around the old farmhouse.

But when he thought of his sister now, and of Miss Wentworth, these memories seemed like some fairy tale, read in a book, rather than an actual history in which he himself had been a living actor.

But young Cathcart's mood was not wholly a sentimental sympathy with the changing year, the shortening days, the flight of birds and the decay of flowers. He had not been unobservant of his friend's demeanor. He fancied that he perceived in Rose Wentworth a growing pleasure in Heywood's attentions. He resisted the impression stoutly. He cast it out with a resolute effort. It returned again. When the mind is ill at ease and restless, a forbidden thought, in spite of all its efforts, will play about it as at night a moth whirls about a lamp; and, like this foolish moth miller, the more it is hurt by the flame through which it dashes the more irresistible seems the attraction, until singed, maimed and sore, the poor insect lies crumpled up beneath the light which lured it to its destruction.

It is not to be imagined that Cathcart had for the several years past lived in an unbroken dream of hope, while at the same time he had taken no direct steps to secure his position in Miss Wentworth's regard.

Until he was established in life, or had a near prospect of it, he did not deem it honorable, certainly not wise, to disclose to Miss Wentworth the secret hope of his life. A more impulsive and less reticent nature could scarcely have met the object of his supreme affection from week to week without disclosing his feelings. Some moment of unguarded enthusiasm would be likely to draw forth the confession. Some eager and supplicating glance would be likely to betray what the tongue faltered to tell. Even in a nature as self-restrained and silent as Barton Cathcart's, this long probation must have ended itself in some unexpected disclosure, had he not marked out for himself a clear line and followed it with scrupulous fidelity. He had already learned an invaluable secret, that one-half of the troubles of life may be prevented, and of the troubles that arise one-half may be alleviated, by occupation. He had given to his school an unstinted measure of his time and thought; and, whatever time could be wrung from sleep and amusement, compatible with health, he bestowed upon the study of law. But this school was ended. His legal preparation was already far beyond what has been found sufficient to set up many a successful lawyer. But it was not enough for him barely to succeed. After another year spent at Cambridge he hoped to have laid a foundation on which he could build for life. When, therefore, during this summer, he had noticed Heywood's increasing interest in Dr. Wentworth's family, he could not forbear uneasiness. The matter was not helped by Tommy Taft's affectionate solicitude.

"Look here, Barton, what is your opinion of that southern feller that's come to live at Chandler's?"

"My opinion, Tommy, is very favorable. He is a perfect gentleman and an honorable man. I think very highly of him."

"Well, I s'posed so by the way you and he went round together. They say he's goin' to get Chandler's money. I've no objection. Mrs. Chandler's a mighty nice woman; but *he*,—Lord, Barton, he's nothin' but a needle pullin' a gold thread after it; the needle ain't a mite fatter for all it does. But I guess that southern feller wants a leetle more'n money."

"I should hope so, Tommy. Money is useful in its way; but i takes more than that to make a man."

"Sartain! But some folks thinks they have the right to the best of every thing, jest because they've got money. Now, for my part, I don't b'lieve that southern feller goes down to Dr. Wentworth to git pills. If he's sick as often as he goes there, then it's a sort of ailin' that doctor-stuff ain't likely to cure!"

Barton knew that Tommy Taft's judgments of affairs were seldom mistaken, and these hints fell in with his own fears. Yet he had no wish to make Tommy a confidant of his hopes and fears. The color came slightly to his cheek, and he was silent.

"It's my opinion that Miss Rose knows who she likes," added Tommy, sententiously, at the same time nodding his head cornerwise several times at the ground, as if the grass had disputed him.

"I presume she does," said Barton. "Most rational people do."

"There was that Boston feller that was here two or three summers, I could have told him from the fust that he couldn't catch that bird. Why, you see, I watched 'em pretty close at fust, but after a little while I let 'em swing. I seed that she looked down on him; and I'm thinkin' Miss Rose won't choose below her."

Barton did not care to prolong the conversation with Tommy Taft; but, except by an abrupt departure, he could not easily stop him. The moment that any one showed an anxiety to avoid any topic, Tommy seized upon it with the avidity of a terrier, and raced it and chased it to the uttermost. Tommy resumed:

"I kinder think it's another thing with this southern feller;" for Tommy would never call him by his proper name. "I've seen 'em a good deal more'n they think, and I've noticed that she sort o' holds back and don't look at him so straight and honest-like as she does to other folks. And she gives him a chance, too; and he's there almost every day on one arrant or another. To be sure it's a great place to go to, and every body is to hum there; but then," said Tommy, with a knowing wink, "there's a difference, you know. If she ain't about the best pleased with him of any feller that's come along, then all signs fail, that's all."

And Tommy renewed his bows at the ground in the most solemn and emphatic manner.

Every word was a confirmation of Barton Cathcart's fears. They irritated him like the spines of nettles.

"Well, Tommy, I presume it's her own business. If she's suited I suppose we ought to be."

Tommy drew himself up to his full height, and turning his face directly on Barton, without any sting in his tone or banter in his manner, said:

"Barton, my boy, I've know'd you ever since you was so high. I took to you naterally. I've jest been prouder of you than I ever was of any thing on ship or shore; and if I could see you married to Rose, I wouldn't care a wink if I didn't live an hour afterward. 'Tain't no use, boy, for you and me to be coverin' up things. I know ye better'n you do yourself. Let me tell ye, you keep too shet up. There's a heap of things in you that you'd do better to git out. What sort of a room is't where the fire hain't any chimney? Now it's my opinion that you are smoked up inside with thoughts and feelins, jes' 'cause you've no vent to let the stuff out. And though Tommy is a one-legged old sinner, the man's not alive that dare say he ever forgot his friend."

Barton needed no assurance of the old man's fidelity. Although he knew that his unbounded audacity would lead him to thrust in his remarks upon any man's business for the mere pleasure which he seemed to take in the exercise of his shrewdness, yet, in his own case, Barton knew the real and almost romantic affection which old Tommy bore to him. He was also affected by the fact that the old man, hanging on the skirts of society, poor, and now growing every year more and more feeble, had evidently been watching for his interest, during years of absence, with paternal fidelity. Besides all this, a proud and sensitive nature finds it far easier, often, to speak confidingly to one in a station below him than to an equal or a superior.

Whatever may have been the influences moving him, Barton felt that it would be a great relief to lean on another's judgment.

"Well, Uncle Tommy, what would you do if you were in my place?"

"Now that's sensible like, Barton, my boy. I'd go right to that fellow, and ask him plump what he's after. If he's just foolin round for the fun on't, he ought to understand that there's other folks lives in this world as well as him And if he is in 'arnest, why, then, the woman has got to choose between ye, that's all."

"I'll do it, by heavens!" said Barton, with intense earnestness, "I've lost too much time already."

"That's it,—you're right now." Then, with a half relapse into his ordinary teasing manner, Tommy added: "It's surprisin' how we take advice that travels the same way we do! It's like hittin' a ball the same way it's rollin' a'ready."

The best advice in the world may be ruined in the execution. And the execution of a delicate task depends chiefly on the fine condition of a man's faculties. On some days the mind comes up out of sleep, like the sun in a clear October morning. There is neither cloud nor haze. The thoughts and feelings move in unison, and the tongue, touched from within, like a magnet, draws to itself fitting words and sentences. It no longer moves like a tugging plough, heavily and slowly, but touches lightly and glances from topic to topic as sunlight from dew drop to dew drop.

Then come the cloudy days. Ill-assorted thoughts procure for themselves a disagreeable utterance. We spoil whatever we touch. We do nothing lightly, deftly, wisely. The astronomer must defer his observations when clouds are in the sky. In some of the more delicate operations of mechanics, the workman will not touch a tool on days when, as he says, "his hand is dead." What lawyer has not lost cases because he came before the court and jury with his head wearied and his whole body jaded by long-continued and exhausting excitements? What doctor has not lost patients by being called, after sleepless nights, with a stupid brain, to a case requiring insight, precision, and instant action? What minister has not spoiled a good subject by a poor sermon, because the Sabbath had come round and he must preach, in spite of catarrh and influenza? What fisherman has not lost his trout by an unskilful splash, when he meant delicately to skim the surface with the likeness of a flitting, fluttering fly?

Enough. Barton slept little after this interview with Tommy Taft. When he awaked, he woke with only half of himself, and that the poorest part. But the impulse of the night before remained.

Barton left Tommy Taft resolved to see Heywood and to have an understanding with him. He went to Mr. Chandler's house. But already in his walk thither his purpose was somewhat shaken. For, as he reflected how he would break the matter to his friend, he began to see so many difficulties that his purpose wavered. "Shall I ask him what his intentions are toward Miss Wentworth? What if he should reply by asking me on whose authority I inquire? She has a father and mother; have *they* deputed me to watch over their daughter's welfare? Or he may say, 'Are you an accepted suitor of Miss Rose? If not, on what grounds do you interfere?' What business have I at any rate to meddle with Heywood's affair in this matter? There is nothing in my relations to Rose which makes it improper for any other gentleman to solicit her affection. What would Rose think if she knew that I had interrogated Heywood about his affection for her? She would have a just reason for being angry with me. It would be an impertinence. I could never look her in the face afterward if she knew it."

So reasoning, he would have gone past, without calling, but Heywood saw him, and called out:

"Barton, come in! Where do you keep yourself lately? Are you hidden in the woods, or have you gone home to live like a hermit? What are you doing nowadays! Since your school was given up I hardly see you any more. By the way, what a splendid fellow the doctor is! But he ought to be a professor in some college, where talking is the proper business. At his house I think there is a little too much of it."

"I've noticed, though, that he never talks without listeners."

"That's the mischief of it. We young folks want a good time. But as soon as they hear him speaking, off goes Rose, and off goes every body, and we have to go too. How did you enjoy the other evening?"

"Not much—I was not in good trim. Are you going to the grand nutting party next week?"

"Of course I am. Miss Rose has laid injunctions upon all her friends. Let all the squirrels take notice! Not a nut do we mean to leave behind us, and any winter stores which they may desire should be put up immediately."

Barton, who had started rather fiercely on his errand, returned with a sense of having escaped a great blunder.

"This comes," said he to himself, "of acting without reflection. My own way is the best, after all. I never talk over my feelings with any one, and act upon his suggestion, without regretting i afterward. I will keep my own counsels, and act upon my own proper judgment, and especially, I do not think I shall go to Tommy Taft again. Fool that I was to let him see—— after all, he knew it before. A strange old man!—full of experience and of wisdom of which he makes playthings—never uses them soberly for himself. I cannot hide any thing from him. But I can keep him silent.—Shall I speak with my mother? Why should I? What advice can she give me. She knows my mind already. It will only be another cloud on her shaded path. I always have carried my own troubles in silence, and why not now? If God leavens human thoughts and purposes with an element of his own wisdom, all will come right."

Continuous and intense excitement of feeling works a morbid physical condition of the brain. It becomes at once fertile and poor. It pours out an endless abundance of thought and emotion, but without variety or control. The same feeling rises and breaks, only to bubble up again, pass through the same course, to be followed a hundred times by the same process. Over and over again a thought traverses a small circle, coming back to its starting place, and moving a narrow round, until the mind seems like a clock, whose weights pull at the wheels, and move the hands round and round the dial, day and night, with perpetual iteration.

It was in vain that Barton Cathcart sought to control his mind, so long as he remained at home, with the leisure of vacation and in the presence of those objects which wrought such disturbance to his thoughts.

His father had long wished Barton to visit several of the remote western States, where he had invested some money in land, to examine the various tracts, ascertain their quality, position and prospects, arrange for the proper settlement of taxes, and, in one or two instances, redeem some small parcels which had, through the neglect of agents, been sold for taxes.

All day long after seeing Heywood he had turned his affairs over and over in his mind, till he was weary of them, of himself, and of life. But all night he repeated the process, whether dreaming or waking. As the next day dawned, Barton awoke from a short sleep by hearing some one say, "Go West." At any rate, he thought he heard the sentence, though on springing up no one was present. But the impression was strong that he had heard a real voice. The project stood out before him with attractive features. It would break up his nervous irritation, give him an opportunity of seeing something of his native land, and satisfy that love of novelty and adventure which every young man of mettle is apt to have.

Before he had fairly dressed himself, Barton had settled the matter. When his father came in to breakfast, Barton said with some suddenness:

"Father, I am going out west, and if you will make out my instructions, I will attend to your business."

Before sundown every thing was prepared, and early on the next day Barton was on his way to the far west.

Meanwhile, the arrangements had been made for a grand nutting expedition on the week succeeding Barton's departure. The suddenness of his start took every one by surprise. Why *did* he go before the picnic? Why did he not at least say good-bye. What had happened, or was about to happen, that he should disappear so mysteriously?

But, like all other minor matters in life, it was a day's wonder, and then sank and was forgotten, especially when the Sabbath was passed and Tuesday was set for the excursion. The region selected for the expedition lay a mile or two beyond 'Biah Cathcart's, where long strips of chestnut woods covered a line of low hills, or skirted down their sides. Near the centre of this range of hills, but half a mile back, was a ravine, one of the most romantic and picturesque places in the region, and not the less attractive to many because its pools of clear, cool water were filled with trout. Not far from the opening of this ravine the dinner was to be eaten; and all the baskets and packages pertaining thereto were put under charge of Hiram Beers, who also had a general oversight of all the "critters," as Deacon Marble styled the horses. This annual nutting day was in no respect ecclesiastical. It was not marked down in the calendar. No sin was imputed for the neglect of it. Yet, with occasional exceptions, it had for many years been a kind of parish reunion. The minister, the deacons, the trustees, the staid and dignified old members were expected to turn out to renew their youth and gallantries; and even more than on Thanksgiving Day certain antics and frivolities were permitted among church members, which on any other occasion, would have savored of a levity that Aunt Polly Marble would have witnessed with severe disapprobation.

Early on that morning there began to wend along the road families of young and old, parties of young men and maidens, a few on horseback, many in wagons which were built for harvest, but, by a little "slicking up," served to carry parties to fishing excursions, to huskings, and to nutting parties. Farmer Cathcart was already waiting—his handsome team hitched at the post, his wife Rachel putting in the last little delicacies for the dinner. One after another of his old friends passed by, cheerily saluting him—some with a hearty good-morning, some with an exhortation to make haste, and one or two with specimens of homely wit, the more relishful because well seasoned and often used.

Hiram Beers, of course, shone glorious with a span of Black-Hawk Morgan horses, for which "a New York gentleman said that if he had them in the city he could get a thousand dollars!" Of course this thousand-dollar team was worthily employed in bringing Dr. Wentworth's family,—a portion of them at any rate, —the doctor and his wife, Rose and Agate Bissell, while the residue followed in another vehicle drawn by the doctor's own horses, under the direction of Pete Sawmill, who on such occasions felt his own superiority over all the rest of mankind.

Dr. Buell rode in his favorite chaise, carrying with him a neighboring minister who had preached for him on Sunday, and with whom he had sat up half of Sunday night discussing certain recondite points of theology on which said brother had shown a dangerous laxity of opinion.

Behind him came Deacon Trowbridge, to whom a good conscience and a good digestion, well exercised, had given such admirable proportions that all men wondered how he and his wife, who was not a whit less blessed than her husband, could sit in one seat, or how one ordinary horse could draw them!

Hiram kept up a running fire as they severally arrived.

"Good mornin', Doctor Buell! drive in here—that's a good hitchin' spot. Don't stop now I'll take the darlin' out of the thills, and see that he's fastened all right. You'd better go on and keep the deacons in order. There's no tellin', when a horse or a deacon gits loose in a big pasture, what he'll do. I've known old horses break their necks tryin' to race and jump as the young colts do."

Next came up Deacon Trowbridge.

"Bless me, Deacon!—Good morning, marm!—if I'm not glad to see you! We've been waitin' for some slim fellow like you to climb the trees and shake off the chestnuts. The boys all look to you, Deacon, for an example!"

The good-natured and fat deacon smiled, and even essayed a faint joke:

"Yes, Hiram, you'll see the nuts fly, if I only get up into them tree-tops!"

"Yes, yes; I'll bet on you and the squirrels!" said Hiram, who could spare but a word or two on each party, and already had turned to a new comer, leaving Deacon Trowbridge standing with an answer in his mouth, in a waiting posture, as if he could not afford to lose a good thing.

And we think so too, and will present it for him. The deacon was waiting to say:

"If I get *on* a squirrel, Hiram, he'll not be worth much!"

There is an unending charm that goes with the supple gayeties of the young. But another interest, scarcely less, though of a different kind, attends the occasional outbreak of youthful frolics among the old. Here were the yellow woods full of happy people: and, among them, many old men and women of stern morals and severe manner of life,—most of them stiffened with hard labor, and not more than once or twice in a year seeking pleasure or recreation for their own sakes. Many, many years it is since they sprang into the trees as do those nimble youngsters who are making the chestnuts rattle from the topmost boughs. But they remember their youthful feats, and boast them, and banter each other. Hiram seemed determined to have some of the old gentlemen up in the trees:

"I tell ye, Deacon Trowbridge, I think you're as smart yet as Deacon Marble is, though he takes on sech a nimble sort of steppin' 'round. It's my opinion that, at a fair climb, you'd beat him."

"Oh, Hiram, I'm too heavy—though I'm pretty spry yet.

You see, brother Marble hasn't got so much to carry up with him!"

"No, nor so much strength to do it with."

"I'll tell ye what," said Deacon Marble, quite in the spirit of a boy, "I'll stump you, Trowbridge, to try it. I'll give you that big tree with low branches, and I'll take that slim one—and beat you."

They soon pulled off their coats and assailed their respective trees. Good Deacon Trowbridge, when his phlegmatic nature was thoroughly aroused, was a man of great strength. He took a hug at the tree such as a bear might have given; and, at first, it seemed as if he were going to succeed. But each hoist grew slower, and, though cheered by Hiram, it was doubtful if he could reach the limb just above his head. If each jerk upward had carried his body up as fast as it did the leg of his pantaloons, he would soon have mounted the coveted branch. At length he got hold of it, but no more could he do. It was too high for him to let go and jump, and as to getting any higher, it was out of the question. The poor man seemed in a woful plight; but Hiram, equal to every emergency, had procured a rail, and, planting it under his foot, eased him down safely to the ground. Meanwhile, Deacon Marble, slim and nervous, had gone up his way like a squirrel. Already he was seeking out the topmost boughs, and rattling down the chestnuts in a perfect shower.

The shouts of merriment soon drew many to this rather unusual scene, and, among others, the deacons' wives. Mrs. Trowbridge gave way to unrestrained laughter. She was a natural laugher. She laughed with her mouth, her eyes, her whole face, with her voice and all her body. It was no silvery trickle, but a generous tide, that set in strongly, filled every indentation along the shore, and plashed up in spray all the more, if any obstacle sought to stay it.

"Well, Trowbridge,"—and then, like a child with the hooping-cough, she gave way to a paroxysm of laughter,—"I should as soon"—and again she was swept away from her remark, like one carried out from shore by a refluent wave,—"I should as soon expect"—the words were drowned in laugh—"to see" * * "to see * * "a but——" at which she fairly seemed to dissolve, and could no longer hold herself up, "——a butter-tub climb a tree!"

Far other were the emotions which filled the soul of Polly Marble when she beheld the scene. A fire blazed behind her spectacles. Though she was infirm in limb, the weakness had in no respect reached her head, every member of which was active. At first she seemed unable to utter her amazement. At length she gained relief:

"Deacon Marble, you'd better come down! An old man like you a courtin' death in the top of them trees ought to be ashamed of himself! It ain't decent."

Then turning to those around her, she expressed herself thus:

"Wal, Hiram, I dew hope you're satisfied at last. You're always huntin' after mischief, and now you've got it. To think of't! One deacon a puffin' and red on the ground, and the other up in the tree-top! No, it's no laughin' matter! It's a sin and a shame, and I'm surprised that any body should laugh at such levity and folly," giving poor Mrs. Trowbridge a look of reproof that ought to have sobered her, but which in fact served to renew her agony of laughing, for she palpitated, and held on to her sides, and gasped: "Oh, I shall die—with—laughing—dew stop!"

Turning to her husband, Mrs. Marble began expostulating with him.

"Deacon Marble, if you have any respect for me, or for yourself—and I don't think you have a speck—you'll come down! Every body's laughin' at you. You're a sight to behold. It's a wicked thing, and agin' natur', for an old man like you to think he's a boy, and caper about in the trees. If the Lord had meant you to be a squirrel he'd a made you so!"

"Don't, Polly, don't. I'm comin' down. Just look here, I wan't to tell you something!"

Incautious Polly! Will you never learn the deceitfulness of that husband of yours? She ventures under the tree to hear what he has to say, just as he gives a rousing shake to the branch on which he was lying. Down came the chestnuts, and down came the chestnut-burrs! They rattled on her bonnet, they pattered on her shoulders, and one burr—a frivolous burr, given to levity,—struck her new spectacles and knocked them quite out of symmetry.

The nimble deacon was soon on the ground, and would fain have left the impression on his spouse that it was merely the act of getting off the limb to come down that brought upon her the chestnuts. Hiram was in ecstasy.

"Isn't the deacon cute? Oh, what a politician he'd a made, if he'd only kept out of the church and away from religion!"

Other parties along the hills, widely separated, were busy with pranks and mirth. The young people climbed, the old and the very young picked up the brown nuts. The scene was charming. Dr. Wentworth and his family were as busy as any. It was Pete's office to shake the trees. The whole force of his peculiar genius now had full play. His skill in climbing was something worth looking at. His venturesomeness was equal to his skill and strength. It was no great feat to him, when trees interlocked, to swing from one to another,—to drop from a higher branch to a lower, never missing his hold. He cleared a tree of nuts in an incredibly short time, and the doctor's brown bags, replenished from Pete's labors, began to stand out with fatness.

Heywood had made himself agreeable to the various parties. His aunt had joined the Wentworths, and Rose seemed not displeased with the attentions which he paid her. In truth, there was something in Heywood's manner peculiarly winning. He was strong, frank, manly; but in every thing an innate refinement manifested itself, and that unconscious self-possession and quietness which come from long familiarity with good society. Rose had seldom, if ever, met with one whose manners approached so near to a fine art, while his spirit was as artless, apparently, as a child's. That the charm had produced no effect I cannot honestly affirm. That it was more than an impression upon her imagination I do not believe. This certainly is much, and in perhaps a majority of cases it is final and effectual. But while Rose was pleased with Heywood, and found his presence more and more agreeable, she began to look more closely at her own feelings, at her relations and his to other people.

During the whole summer Rose had perceived a declension of attention in Barton Cathcart towards her, and nearly in the proportion in which Heywood had grown more attentive. It seemed as if one was quietly withdrawing and giving place to the other.

There are many things which we do not value if only we can have them, but which we painfully miss if they are withheld Every one has noticed how little effect praise produces on him.

and yet how distinctly he feels the lack of it when it is not given While Barton seemed at home with her, and the long acquaintanceship and childhood associations clustered about their familiar intercourse, Rose did not fairly estimate the value at which she held Barton. But when he seemed to fall off, when in his stead another, of a wholly different and contrasted nature, came in his place, Rose was conscious, not of positive pain, or even regret, but of uneasiness and of a questioning within herself.

Heywood she believed to be true and right-minded. She thought that his nature was transparent. He was one who could never appear in any society without drawing to him all eyes, and could never be known without drawing to him as well the confidence of all. And yet there was no sense of reserved power with him. His whole nature lay apparent. There were no depths out of which might rise unexpected disclosures. He was fine-natured, handsome, accomplished, brilliant in society, and true-hearted. These qualities could not fail to touch any one's fancy. But in all their intercourse he had never introduced any subject deeper than is sounded by common experience. While both of these friends were near her, each yielding the fruit of his own nature, the contrast was not so much displayed. Rose had felt a vague uneasiness through the summer, that Barton, though seeming the same in manner as ever, had less and less frequented her father's house During his vacation he had but once visited them; and now, suddenly, without any leave-taking, he had gone away, to be absent for months. Rose was surprised and piqued by this seeming want of care for her, who had been his friend from childhood. It did not seem as if there could ever be a pause in their friendship any more than between herself and her father or mother. She could scarcely mark the degrees through which, in some measure, she and Barton had let go of each other; but it was clear to her that they were receding. With distance came perspective. More than ever now she valued that depth of nature in Barton, out of which endless mysteries came. She could never divine from the themes of to day what would be the range of thought on which his mind would travel when next they met. There was a strong aspiration in him, an indefinable yearning, which wrought in him on the one side self-distrust and humility, and on the other exceeding boldness and changeful activity. Her father was fruitful of thought, but restful. Barton was restless—a voyager along new seas and strange continents. Now that he was parted from her—so abruptly that it seemed as if he was broken off—she became conscious of the force and depth of his character. If there was an uncertain unrestfulness in it, it was perhaps but the fermentation which, when completed, would sink the lees to the bottom and leave the generous wine clear and strong.

It ought not to be thought that these analyses were made by Rose. They are but the philosophical deduction and solution of certain impressions and convictions in her mind. And it was necessary to draw them out with some distinctness, in order to account for her present course. For, by one of those fortunate accidents which seem to attend picnics in the woods, Heywood and Rose had wandered off from the family. Either chestnuts lay thicker toward a little brook, which gurgled and twined through a dell, and was proud of the yellow leaves which it whirled in mimic rafts down its pretty cascades, or collected in some eddying pool, or else they were attracted by the mossy beauty of a beech-tree, whose roots had been partially undermined, but whose undiminished green yet braved the frosts. There sat Rose, and Heywood in his very soul believed that so lovely a creature there was not in all the world besides. Could he bear her in triumph home to his friends he could ask no other surety of happiness for life, and no other pledge of his victory over Virginia prejudice!

Why did Rose suffer these illusions which in her secret soul she knew could not be realized? Tell me, ye who have suffered the enchantment of the midsummer night's dreams and fancies! Tell me, ye who remember how the charmed imagination hushes every caution, sees all events in heightened colors, and bears one as in a delicious dream, over paths and through experiences which, though distinct, seem unreal, magical, enchanting!

Have you never seen a child's bubble blown till its glowing sides are pictured in exquisite tints, and then thrown off into the air, rising or settling down, with motion so gentle that it seems more like a thought than a thing? Untouched, it holds on, a brilliant globe, on whose sides earthly objects, purified and refined, are reflected, as if they were heavenly pictures—revelations of scenes unapproachable. But, once seek to possess it, lay but your lightest finger upon it, and the arch and orb collapse, and the brilliant picture disappears!

The horn sounded for the dinner. Calls were heard for one and another, and for Rose. Soon she was seen slowly coming up the dell. Her eyes showed that she had been weeping. Heywood was with her, as one who is absent. Something between sadness and sternness was in his face. I know not what had passed; nor how Rose excused herself for permitting what she had always before forestalled and prevented. Perhaps she did not excuse herself. Perhaps her sense of regret at Barton's neglect and unceremonious leaving had carried her farther than she knew, and she awoke with a strong rebound into her full former self. I only know that she seemed more pained and regretful than she had ever been seen before. But even greater pangs were just before her.

The stream near whose border Rose had been sitting came down, not far above them, from a ravine of singular beauty. At the point where the water fairly escaped from its entanglement, the rocks came so near together as to form a kind of door, not more than twenty feet wide, but its sides were steep, and rose to a considerable height, and then sloping off backward, were covered with shrubs and finally with trees. Once within that door a charming space opened, between one and two hundred feet in diameter, and shut in by walls to a great height. At the farther side, as you entered, the stream, descending in a fall about thirty feet in height, fell into a deep pool. It then stole away close by the rocks, leaving a level space on the other side large enough for a party of several hundred. Before it made its plunge, the waters far up might be seen rushing down an incline on the shelving rocks at an angle of forty-five degrees. On either side of this chamber the rocks were stratified, and shrubs and plants grew in their seams. The more adventurous among the young men, by dextrous use of their toes in these rifts, and by grasping firmly the roots or stems with their hands, climbed up the steep face of the rocks, and ascending above the cascade, followed up the ravine to new falls and romantic passages. Already a dozen, against the protestation of the ladies, had scattered themselves along the precipitous cliffs. Hey wood, who sat buried in thought, seemed suddenly to awake, and began climbing the dangerous way. No one could be more adroit; yet even he could not afford to go along that perilous way with wandering thoughts. Suddenly there arose a wild outcry. Those below looked up to see the splash of water along the inclined way above the fall, and quicker than thought, shot out over the fall, Heywood was seen descending toward the pool beneath! Within it lay many rocks broken off by frosts and hidden by the water, and no more dangerous place for a plunge could well be found.

Into the boiling pool he dropped and disappeared. In a moment—it seemed to Rose an age—a dark form emerged along the edge of the pool. Instantly, on the alarm, there was a rush from every direction. But Pete, who was half way up the cliff, seemed fairly to glide down the side of the rock, so nimbly did he descend; and first of all he was by Heywood's side, and lifted him from the water, and laid him upon the mossy meadow just beyond.

Dr. Wentworth was sent for, and soon arrived. Heywood lay like one dead. The wet hair fell back from his white temples. Rose chafed his hands, and gazed upon him with an expression of indescribable anguish. With a faint cry, as Pete laid Heywood upon the moss, Alice Cathcart fell into her father's arms fainting. But already Heywood began to revive. He had been stunned by the fall. Arrangements were speedily made to convey him to 'Biah Cathcart's, the nearest point at which he could receive needed attention, and where Dr. Wentworth could make a more critical examination of his hurts.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONVALESCENCE.

Heywood revived a little. But he was unable to stand, and it was necessary to carry him out of the gorge. It was not difficult to convey him to the opening. But here he was stopped. The only mode of entrance or exit was by a narrow ledge, some six feet above the brook, and this path was so difficult that each one was obliged to sustain himself by holding fast to the limbs of a spruce tree which, growing out of a rift in the rocks above, reached down its branches and afforded a safe hold. At the very turning point of the rock it was necessary to slip around a jutting corner in order to get securely upon the path on the other side. This feat, to one of moderately firm head, was not difficult or perilous. It was often accomplished, and had been, as we have seen, to-day, by ladies, and was a bit of bravery which enhanced the pleasure of an excursion to the glen. But a path which could be easily traced by a single person would be far more difficult when a party should attempt it bearing a helpless man in their arms. Various devices were suggested, but all seemed impracticable, and the counsellors were at a loss what steps to take. It was suggested that they should send down to Cathcart's for ropes, and fastening them to trees above, swing Heywood around the point; or draw him up the face of the rocks to the slope above, and convey him thence down an old charcoal-burners' road.

An exclamation of fear and wonder called all eyes to Pete's doings. He seemed to have taken in all the difficulties at a glance, and to have seen the easiest solution of them, provided one had strength enough, a good eye and sure foot. Without saying a word or asking permission, Pete took up Heywood, as if he were no heavier than Rose used to be when he strode all over the country with her, and laid him diagonally across his breast, so that his own long left arm passed under Heywood's right arm, over his loins, with a firm clasp, such as only great strength and length of limbs could have effected. But Heywood groaned with pain, and

Pete relinquished this hold. After a moment's pause, Pete lifted Heywood again, and laying him back to back, so that his own head would come at Heywood's neck, he held him fast with his right arm upon his shoulder, leaving his left hand free for other purposes. Then, with short steps, he descended into the brook, which made its way out of the gorge through rocks lying in every position, sinking now into deep pools, then sliding over wide and slippery stones with a shallow sheet, and playing every other feat which an untamed mountain stream is wont to do. With a practised eye Pete selected each point for his feet; with a sure foot he planted himself firmly on each selected spot—now wading, now with the help of a branch turning sharp angles, never baffled or for a moment perplexed, until, before those who took the regular path could get round below to the point where the stream issued from its rough rocky bed, Pete had come out triumphantly, and was walking rapidly through the woods to 'Biah Cathcart's wagon, in which Heywood was speedily conveyed to Cathcart's house.

It was with clouded face and more suffering than she had ever experienced that Rose followed with her father in the steps of the injured man. Alice, in full sympathy with Rose, seemed even more affected, but in a different way. They appeared to have changed natures—Rose was sunk in thought; Alice was demonstrative in her feeling. But neither of them spoke.

As soon as they arrived, Heywood was conveyed to the blue room opening out of the sitting-room. Upon an examination, it was found that two ribs had been fractured and he had received a blow upon the head,—whether severe or not, could not be determined except by after-symptoms. It was judged wise not to attempt to remove him to Mr. Chandler's, and, for several weeks, he was the guest of the Cathcarts.

The centre of authority in a household is permanent, but the centre of interest fluctuates almost from day to day: now, it is a little child around which all revolve; a long-absent friend, or a child returned from school, for a day or two, holds all other interests subordinate. But nothing transforms the house so instantly, and reaches out with such force to change the whole economy, as a sick-room. It is the heart of the house, and the pulse of the mansion beats according to its expansion or contraction. The patient, it may be, can neither speak nor see, yet any member of the family, rising up or sitting down, going out or coming in, is conscious that he is affected by the relations of his action to the comfort of the sufferer. And so sickness is a silent legislator, and lays its law upon the domestic commonwealth.

If Heywood had sought out a place in which to be sick, he could not have selected more skilfully. The social atmosphere of the place was cheering and soothing. The order and quietness of the household, that inexplicable *something* which makes some houses frigid and repulsive, and others genial and attractive,—a something made up in part by the dispositions and ways of the inmates, and in part too by the proportions and style of the rooms and passages, the colors and details of form—all contributed important elements.

The blue room was wainscotted for about four feet from the floor. The residue of the sides was papered with pale pearly blue. The ceiling had a faint tint of the same color.

In this room stood an old-fashioned *secretary* of solid mahogany; on another side the book shelves; and all the chairs were old-fashioned, heavy and of mahogany. The windows, too, were old-fashioned, with small six-by-eight panes of glass, with inside folding shutters. From the bed one could look out into the sitting-room, through the open door, and through a window on its far side, the yard and its shrubbery could be seen, the western horizon, and the setting sun, which, when the curtains were removed, shot its last rays clear through the sitting-room across the floor of the blue room, where, from the opposite horizon, through its own windows, every morning the sunlight fell.

For a day or two Heywood seemed stupefied; then a slight fever arose; he was restless and wandering in mind. He seemed oblivious of the recent scenes, and made no allusion to persons or things in the North. Starting from a moment's sleep, he would call his mother; and when Rachel Cathcart, who was seldom beyond earshot, came to his side, a perplexed smile would come over his face, as if he was conscious that he had made some mistake, but was unable to discern what the mistake was.

During this time his aunt, Mrs. Chandler, remained continually with him, dividing the care with Rachel Cathcart.

One morning, while Mrs. Chandler went home for an hour or two, Alice sat in Heywood's room. The window stood open

The autumnal sun and autumnal air gave a peculiar charm to the day.

Nature seemed as one who has been at a banquet. The hills glowed with brilliant colors. The near trees were like jovial maskers in a holiday. Many of the trees on which Alice's eye rested had been planted by her brother Barton, who, instructed by Dr. Wentworth's better knowledge, had selected them with reference to spring and autumn tints, as well as to their forms and relative harmonies. A clump of Norway spruces was fringed on one side with scarlet sumachs, a fine mountain ash relieved its clusters of berries against the dark green, and on one of the evergreens an ampelopsis had climbed, and peeped out in crimson here and there, up to the top, where it had completely covered the tips. There was something freakish in the gay and familiar way in which this brilliant vine took liberties with a sober tree, reminding one of the caprices which a pet child sometimes takes with a solemn old grandfather—climbing his shoulders, disarranging his hair, pulling at his sacred spectacles! Alice, like many another not given to talking, made up in musings and reveries. She was this morning full of nameless feelings, changing from light to dark almost as fast as the colors changed when her eye moved over the external prospect. Yet Heywood's very breath was audible to her ear, nor could he draw a long breath, nor move a hand without her notice. Thus the woman heart pulsed between affectionate duty and fanciful beauty. Now, she listened to murmurs of the bees, then to the pretentious buzzing of the flies, that seemed inspired to-day with more than usual affection. They insisted on familiarity. They refused to take offence at the utmost rudeness. Then she watched the spiders' webs which had been spread and hung in every direction, saying in herself—"How many hopes are like the spider's web, woven in the night, bright in the morning dew, perishing before the first footfall!" A cat, a pure Maltese, sat on the path making her toilet. She licked her paws, and then with them sponged her face, rubbing down her ears with the greatest care; and then she began licking her breast, bending her pliant neck as if intent upon reaching under her very chin. Alice smiled. She had seen other people who thought that their nature was changed because they had licked their breasts smooth. She turned to the bed! It was only a long breath—a sigh in his sleep!

A woodpecker, with little sharp claws that could hold its snug little body in any position, head up, head down, head sideways—ran nimbly round the tree, keenly inspecting each crevice, and probing here and there with its bill. The tree was miserably healthy, and this critic flew away with a harsh, grating note of disgust.

Surely he moved! No. His eyes are closed. He sleeps. Will he ever wake to consciousness and reason?

A crooning of hens and flutter of chickens drew her attention. A hawk was flying past, far above in the sky. What?—danger close up to the heaven? Is the deep pure air infested, as well as swamps, and coverts, and dens? If one creeps, there are creeping enemies. If one flies, there are winged pursuers!

Some one called her:

"Alice!"

She started and went to Heywood. It was his first lucid morning.

"Where am I? What has happened?"

Alice in her joy could hardly answer his questions. Her face was radiant; but with strong restraint upon her feelings, she quieted herself, as if afraid that talking might harm him. She told him simply that he had met with an accident; that he had been for more than a week here in her father's house; that Dr. Wentworth came every day to see him, and would soon be here, and then, if *he* thought best, she would talk with him more.

The name of Dr. Wentworth seemed to catch his ear, and, as a clue, helped him to regain some faint hope of memory in the past.

"Wentworth? Ah—I remember. Were we not in the woods? Let us see. Did not something happen to Miss Rose? Was she hurt?"

Then an expression of sadness fell upon Heywood's face, and he half turned away from Alice, saying:

"No, no, no;—I remember."

The expression of joy and exhilaration which had lit up Alice's face passed away. She turned to the door to summon her mother. Dr. Wentworth was already with his hand upon the latch.

"Ah, Alice, how is our patient? Worse? Your face carries bad tidings."

"No, Doctor, good tidings. He is in his mind again."

"Well then, my dear, you could afford a gladder look for a friend's improvement. But I must see for myself."

Heywood improved every day after this, though at first slowly. His constitution had never been shaken by indulgent habits, and now he reaped the benefit of a virtuous and temperate life. The blow upon his head gave most concern to Dr. Wentworth, and a depression of spirits which hung upon him seemed to the Doctor a not favorable sign. Still, as his symptoms steadily ameliorated, and his strength began to return, he was allowed to hear reading a little at a time. His aunt most frequently took the place of reader. But for some reason her manner of reading rendered Heywood nervous. On the other hand, Alice's voice and manner had a soothing and refreshing influence. Little by little this task fell almost exclusively to her. Her good nature and her kindness never wearied. Whatever she was doing, or however weary, the least hint by word or look was sufficient. Every day she culled from papers and from magazines such passages as she thought likely to please him, and was never better pleased herself than when Heywood's interest in her reading led him to remarks and conversation. After he had begun to sit up a portion of the day, the details of the accident by which he had been injured were told to him. But he recalled nothing distinctly. He remembered the nutting, and he had a faint impression of the glen into which the party had entered. But there was an indistinct impression on his mind that somehow Rose had been connected with his fall and injury. This subject seemed painful to Alice.

"Alice, were you there when I fell?"

"Yes. I saw it all. It was fearful beyond any experience of my life."

"I was climbing?"

"Yes—you had risen higher than the falls."

"And was Rose climbing?"

"No."

"How came she to fall, then?"

"She did not."

"How did I fall, then?"

"You slipped."

"And she held fast?"

"She had nothing to do with you."

"I am sure she had," said he, looking doubtingly at Alice.

But as the subject seemed unwelcome to the gentle Alice, after once or twice renewing his questions, he dropped the subject. As strength returned, so Heywood sought to relieve his kind friends of the tasks of nursing, or at least to lighten them. His thoughts naturally reverted to his Virginia home; and as he found Alice interested in his reminiscences, he was quite willing to solace himself by describing the scenes of his childhood, his father's plantation, mansion, and household. A listener more sympathetic than Alice, one could not desire. She delighted to sit upon her low sewing-chair near the window. Thus the light was thrown upon Heywood's face, while her own was in shadow. Many of the happiest hours of her life were passed thus, and Alice began to dread the day when her gentle services should be no more needed.

October was ended. Its golden scroll was rolled up and put away. November had come, and its nightly frosts, its cold rains, its vigorous winds, had stripped the trees, and the forests were bare. Orchards yet maintained a show of damaged leaves. The white oak and the beach refused to part with all their foliage, and tufts of russet leaves clung to the ends of the branches, not in bravery and beauty, but as mourning weeds worn by trees disconsolate for the loss of summer. It was with surprise, when Heywood first went to his window, that he saw the change. A month had transformed the fields and hills. He had left them glowing with gorgeous colors. Now they were sad and sombre. Nor did he fail to draw an analogy between his own hopes then and his prospects now.

But great as had been the physical changes during his sickness and recovery, yet more wonderful changes had taken place in society than in nature. The great political contest had closed in the election to the Presidency of the United States of Abraham Lincoln (a name then but little known, but since spoken in every corner of Christendom and added to the roll of those upon whom Time has no power). Of all the strifes and struggles Heywood knew nothing And, as 'Biah Cathcart, little by little, detailed the narrative of events, and recounted the early steps that were then taking place in that great and terrible tragedy of civil conflict, Heywood, free from those influences which were swaying so many of his friends in Virginia, entered warmly into Cathcart's feelings for the integrity of the nation.

Heywood could not conceal from himself with what regrets he left this hospitable farm-house of 'Biah Cathcart's to return to his aunt's. He had already staid a fortnight after Dr. Wentworth gave him permission to remove. There was a charm in its quiet which suited both his feelings and his physical condition. The family, too, grew upon his respect and affection. He found in 'Biah Cathcart, though simple and unpretentious, a degree of knowledge which would have been remarkable in a professional man, and which he would never have thought of looking for in a plain farmer. His wife, Rachel Cathcart, seemed like a second mother. With scarcely an element of character like his own mother, she yet produced upon Heywood the same effects that he remembered at home. Alice, too, on nearer acquaintance, and after her timidity was broken through, disclosed a wealth of character which he had not suspected.

It was not, however, till he had returned to Norwood that he became alive to the excitement which prevailed in the nation. The letters from his home gave evidence of the intensity of Southern feeling.

A few extracts from his letters, written or received, will serve to show the influences acting upon him.

* * * "Father says that separation will come, and he does not care how soon. If South Carolina goes out, and a convention is already called to frame an ordinance of secession,—he says that every Southern State will follow—will *have* to follow. He is quite enthusiastic about the Great Republic of the South; and he is doing all that he can to spread his sentiments among the gentlemen who visit us. He derides the idea of war! 'I can carry in this cup,' said he this morning at the breakfast table, 'all the blood that will be shed.' If the South are united, the North will never choose to resist. And if they do, he argues, there will never be more than a single fight. The Northern people, he says, handle tools too well to meddle with the sword. You know that he has great contempt for Northern laborers. They are a sordid set, fit for drudgery, but not for fighting.

"He is vexed that you do not write. It is two months since we have heard a word from you. From some hints in your last letter, he suspects that you are entangled with some fair Yankee damsel; and sister says she knows who it is. Father frets and fumes. 'Every man that loves the South should be at his post. Tom has no business, when Virginia is getting ready to lead the new Republic, to be dallying in the North. He ought to show his colors and stand up for his principles.' And so, you see, Tom, just what is going on here, and will know how to lay your course accordingly.

"Mother is well. We are all gay and lively, in spite of the times. Zanoni has recovered from his injury, and bears the saddle again. We are laying out for great sport this winter. Shall we have you to help?" * * * *

HEYWOOD TO HIS BROTHER HAL.

* * * "I do not wonder that my silence attracts attention. For, though I am not a very diligent correspondent at any time, yet I seldom allow ten weeks to pass without a letter. But you may now know,—I did not care that you should before,—that I have been confined to my room for some six weeks, on account of injuries received by a fall. I was climbing rocks, and fell more than thirty feet, breaking two ribs and receiving a severe blow upon my head. I have had much to sober me; much to give to life a more serious tone. If now the country shall rush into war, as I fear, it will be the climax of my trouble, and I shall almost wish that the blow on my head had been some degrees harder. I cannot sympathize with my father. I am in a better situation to know these Northern people than he or any of our Southern friends can be. You may depend upon it that separation will not be peacefully allowed. There is an under spirit among this people that politicians don't take into account. The Southern opinion of their courage is founded upon a difference in the education, principles and spirit of the North and South, which makes it well nigh impossible for you to appreciate the reason of their seeming reluctance to fight. But should they once be aroused by circumstances which appealed to patriotism and duty, you may depend upon it that they will show not only courage, but an indomitable perseverance which will wear out opposition. And should the question be Union or Disunion—two nations or one United States—I am free to say that my heart goes with the old flag, and though I hope

to be spared the dreadful necessity of lifting my hand against my own State, yet I should deem that, terrible as it would be, an evil less to be dreaded than to lift my hand against that flag of our fathers which gathers to its folds the dearest memories and the most honored associations of American history."

* * * * * * * * * * *

During the whole winter Heywood sought to shield himself from the turbulence of public feeling, which increased with every month. His health, though rapidly improving, was yet delicate, and rendered him specially liable to excitements. He fondly hoped that by some fortunate arrangement the great parties to the conflict might harmonize their differences, and secure that day of peace which for thirty years public men had hoped for and sought in vain.

It did not occur to him that the differences were radical, that should they be really brought into conflict one must destroy the other, and that they *were* being brought into conflict, by a course of events which moved with such breadth and power as to give all the signs that it was impelled by a Divine decree. As men, when a stream begins to rise over its banks, eagerly seek to stop the breach, to dam against and to control the ravages of the rising flood, which disdains all interference and sends them back in dismay to wait and watch what the waters will do, so the wise men and the managers found themselves dealing with uncontrollable events, that were working out their own career, and would not suffer men to restrain them.

About the middle of February, fearing the boisterous weather of March in Massachusetts, and hoping by change of scene and association to put the finishing stroke upon his recovery, Heywood bid farewell to his friends in Norwood and left for New York, on his way to Charleston in South Carolina.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE OLD MAN'S JOURNEY.

Since winter shut in, in good earnest, and snows were deep, and the winds were searching, Tommy Taft found himself every month less able to get about. His last visit had been at Dr. Wentworth's, hoping to hear something about Barton Cathcart, whose continued absence the old man found it hard to bear. He asked no questions. The sturdy old fellow would scarcely be beholden to any one even for information. His own hands could no longer provide him the means of support. Charity he resented. Had it not been for the kindness of Dr. Wentworth and the Cathcarts, he would have suffered. But through his wife, unknown to him, they contrived to supply his necessities under the color of his wife's earnings.

His last visit, we said, was at Dr. Wentworth's. It was a fine winter day, in January. It was one of those days in which nature is both brilliant and relentless. The sparkle of the air, the scope of the sunlight, the transparency of the atmosphere, seem like kindness in nature. But out of that very nourishing air sweep sharp winds, whose temper is unmollified by the sun, and which turn all the radiance of the day to mockery. Did you never think of this? Then *you* have looked out of a parlor-window into this air; or, bundled up in furs, you have shot through the snow in a brilliant sleigh, protected from cold; or you have such vigor of health, that your warm blood, with merry rebound, beats off the assaulting frosts. But were you ever called out into such a day poorly clad, poorly fed, and with slender health? The great northerly winter rolls down her fleece upon her insentient family of sleeping children, and tucks up the flower-roots, and broods upon all the buried, waiting, hybernating creatures; and then, careless of the rest, she sings harsh songs in the woods, and roars all night through the air, as if men in hovels, in sick-rooms, in poor-houses—the sick, the feeble, the old—were none of her concern. And then, after one of those wild-winter revels, when the snow has blinded the air, and whirled and sifted through every crevice, and heaped itself against fence and hedge, and settled down in sheltered places in mountain-drifts, how the morning will come in with open face and charming expression, as if there had been no quarrel all night, nor a saucy wind, nor a pitiless storm, but all was good and beautiful, and not nature, but the lame and feeble were at fault, if any body was chilly, or cold, or suffering!

It was on just such a morning that Tommy Taft grunted and stopped, now and then, for breath, as he made his way to Dr. Wentworth's. He did not think all these fine things. And yet, that was about the meaning of his grunts, if he had had the fancy to unroll and interpret them to the best advantage. Agate Bissell saw him coming up the path. She went to the front door, in real kindness, opened it to the old man, saying:

"Really, Mr. Taft, I pity any body who has to be out on so cold a morning."

"Thankee, marm, for nothing. Keep your pity for those that need it—I don't."

"There's no use in being touchy. You are sick, Taft, and you know it. I think it would be better to let the doctor know, and see if he can't help you."

"He help me? That's good. What can he give me for eyes worn out. Eh? What's good for the innards pretty much used up. Eh? Do you think, Agate, he would give me any thing for my wooden leg? Eh? It's getting monstrous heavy nowadays."

There was something ghastly to pious Agate in such talking by a man seemingly not far from the grave; and though her genuine pity led her to forbear such a reply as she would once have given, yet she could not help saying:

"Taft, if you don't get help it's over with you. Honestly now, my friend, you seem to me to be not far from the grave."

"Jest as true as ye live, Agate. I've ben on the road to it seventy years, and I know I must be gittin' near it by this time The grave is a tavern where a good many put up, Agate, and I never heerd that any body complained of his fare."

This was said in a peculiar tone that might be banter, or sad earnest, and Agate could not tell which. She looked earnestly at Tommy and said:

"Taft, have you made your preparations? Have you done any thing to get ready?"

"I've been gittin' ready as long as I can remember; and as to preparations, you know that Turfmould and I are neighbors, and he's agreed to do the right thing by me. Don't be afraid, Agate. I shall be a landholder before long. Turfmould makes good titles. I guess mine 'll hold."

"Taft, I don't know what to make of you."

"You don't need to make any thing. I am made up, already, and have been as long as I can remember, though if I was to be made up agin, Agate, I don't know any body that would do it better than you, eh?" said Tommy, giving Agate one of those winks that acted upon her like a spark of fire upon powder.

She rose with the dignity of anger, and was spared the trouble of opening the door by Rose, who came in just as Agate was ready and anxious to pass out.

Rose went to the old man with an affectionate cordiality that seemed more like a child's love for a grandparent than the greeting of a neighbor or benefactor.

Tommy tried to rise, but Rose laid her hand on his shoulder familiarly and pressed him back into his chair.

"No, no; there is no use, Uncle, in ceremony. You are not strong. How pale your face is! Father tells me that the winter goes hard with you. I know you will be glad to know that we have heard from Barton Cathcart. He wrote to father on some business. He is very happy, and talks of living in the West."

"Living in the West?" said Tommy, with unaffected surprise, as if his feelings had been hurt; "*living* in the West? and I sha'n't see him agin? Die, and not see the boy agin? I can't have it indeed, Miss Rose, I can't. You must write and tell him so There ain't but one Barton Cathcart in this world, and, if other folks don't know his value, I do. I'd rather die to-morrow, if I could see him to-night, than live a year and not see him. I tell you, Miss Rose," said Tommy, with a solemnity which she had never seen him manifest before, "I can't die till I see Barton. want to ask him something. I want to know ——" and with tha he hesitated, and looked at Rose almost imploringly. "I want to know something about it. If Barton says it's right, it's right, and I'll believe it."

Rose could make nothing out of these sentences. But looking at Tommy as if it was all plain, she said:

"Barton writes that he will be home in February, and I've no doubt he will make it all right."

"Comin' in February? Let's see, that's three or four weeks. Mebbe that 'd be too late."

"Can I help you, Uncle Tommy? Am I not as good as Barton?"

Tommy had risen, and, looking at Rose with great kindness, said:

"Bless you, dear child, you're good enough to be Barton's own self; and—well I must hobble home. I'm afeered of an attack."

Tommy had become subject to paroxysms of severe pain in the stomach. During their continuance he was peculiarly unwilling to have any one present, even his wife. He would shut himself up in his loft and growl and groan by himself. These attacks were becoming more frequent, and the whole system was becoming weakened by this affection. To his daughter's inquiry, Dr. Wentworth replied:

"The disease is obscure. I suppose it to be a cancerous affection of the stomach. That it will prove fatal I do not doubt; but whether he will drop off suddenly, or be gradually worn out with suffering, I cannot tell."

The old man bravely resisted all sympathy. He would allow no one to pity him. He had nothing to say about his own sufferings, and was angry at any allusion to them. Mother Taft, herself feeble, hovered around the old man with a kind of helpless pity, which she dared not speak, and could not hide. The most unlovely side of his character Tommy Taft showed to his wife. This habit was contagious, for several others in the village were known to have the same disagreeable trait. Fortunately it was confined to the one sex!

As the old man rose to depart, Rose felt a presentiment that she should never see him again. She was just about leaving home to make a visit to her relatives in Boston, which should have been made during the holidays, but was prevented by her mother's transient illness. As he moved slowly toward the door, she recalled the days of her childhood, how many times he had frolicked with her, how many little games he had taught her, what funny stories he had invented to amuse her, visiting his rude quarters, and her heart was deeply touched with the old man's sufferings, which, every time she saw him, seemed to be gaining ground. When Tommy turned at the front door, as Rose reached out her hand to say good-bye, a tear rolled down her cheek and fell upon the old man's hand.

"Good-bye, dear Uncle Tommy; I shall never meet you again, until we meet in Heaven."

At first the old man seemed annoyed at her feeling, and said somewhat harshly:

"What you cryin' for? I ain't dead yet? That's funeral business." But, changing his tone, Tommy Taft for a moment seemed to identify Barton with Rose. Looking tenderly at her out from under his great, shaggy eyebrows, he said: "It's jest as like as not that what you say is true; and if I don't see him again, you tell him that I wanted him. I won't trust none of them folks to show me. It's a pretty dark way for a lame old man to be stumblin' in alone; and I shouldn't like to take the wrong turn, you know. This kind o' journey's one a fellow can't go back on. If he gits wrong, why wrong it'll have to be; and if Barton was only here to show me the way—eh?"

Rose was deeply affected. She had never in all her life heard Taft speak of religion except in broad humor, and never at all in its relations to his own future condition. It was not the languid sentiment of one weakened by long sickness, nor the inspiration of fear. The old man would have been as sturdy and defiant as ever had one word been spoken amiss!

Rose knew, in spite of all his faults, the real depth of the old man's heart. She knew the rugged strength of his mind, and the unusual sagacity of his perceptions. Why was he lying useless at the bottom of society? His power should have ranked him among the first. To see such a one peering into the dark future and confessing his inability to see how to tread its way, would have touched the sympathy of one far less sensitive than Rose.

Looking tenderly at the old man, Rose repeated the words:

"'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'"

"That's it," said the old man, "you've hit it exactly. If Barton was along I had as lief trudge as not."

"Barton could not help you. There is One who has said 'I am the Way, and the Life,'—He can help you."

"I shouldn't wonder. But I know Barton, and he's got a head-piece. He's thought of all these matters, and ain't tied up to old world notions; and if *he* says, 'Tommy, it's all real,' that's enough You must understand, Miss Rose, that I don't care much about myself; but, do ye see, I'd like to keep along with Barton, and if I knew the track he's going to take, you may be sure you'd find me there."

If it had been Dr. Buell, he would not have suffered Tommy Taft to rest on any such human affection as a security in death. But Rose, without reflecting on the theological aspects of the case, was glad to see in the old man any thoughtfulness about dying, and she hoped that through his affection for Barton he might be led to a higher trust and a surer hope.

It was indeed the last time she ever saw Taft. Before her return from Boston both Tommy Taft and Barton Cathcart had left Norwood, the one on that road where travellers journey only one way, and Cathcart had gone to the great war which broke forth in the spring, like the conflagration of a continent.

For a week after this interview Tommy Taft was detained in the house by the severity of the weather. When the skies relented he was too weak to get about alone. Every week his anxiety increased to see Barton. Pain could not subdue his stubborn will. But no will could sustain the daily weakening body. It was the last week in February before the old man fairly took to his bed and gave up all hope of seeing Cathcart before he died. His spirits were depressed and his temper not the best. Dr. Buell, faithful to his fractious parishioner, still visited him from time to time, hoping that in some favorable hour he might cast light into his darkened mind. One day a knock sounded at his door.

"Come in,—or stay out as suits ye best,' said Tommy.

Dr. Buell entered.

"Come in, Doctor. You're always at work on the old sinner Really, I had a pain this morning that liked to let me through."

"I hope, Taft, that you find yourself willing to depart, if it be God's will."

"Well, well, as to that, Doctor, I guess when a clock has run down it stops, not because it has a mind to, but because it can't help it!"

"Yet, one may have Christian resignation to events which he cannot control. It is a very solemn thing to die, Taft, and the future is dark to those who have no hope in the Saviour."

"When a ship's driven in by gales, and has to make a harbor, it's mighty convenient to have a light-house; but if there ain't any, why a feller must get in the best way he can."

"But there is a light. Christ is the light of the world. There is no need of darkness to one who trusts Him."

"That's so; that's good doctrine—sound views, no doubt. You was always very clear. I often said that if a man didn't understand you he needn't go to meetin' any where, for there wan't any better preachin' in the State."

In short, it was plain that Taft did not mean to talk about his feelings with the minister. Dr. Buell was deeply moved with pity. The old man's pale face, his weakness, the nature of his disease, indicated that he had not long to live. He hesitated a moment in doubt whether it would be worth while to suggest praying with the sick man, who sat propped up in bed.

"Taft, if it would be pleasant—if you desire it, that is—I shall be glad to pray with you."

"No objection in the world! If I was one of the elect I'd do it myself."

"Is there any thing that you would like me specially to solicit?"

"If it's proper, and just the same to you, ask the Lord to send Barton Cathcart home, and let me see the boy once more afore I die."

Tommy Taft had a large head and face. Usually there was a rugged and somewhat sharp expression to his features. But sickness had turned his face pale, his bushy side locks were very gray, and his eyes peered out from under his brow with more than common brightness. He did not shut them while Doctor Buell prayed. He looked over the form of the kneeling minister with an expression in which mirth was blended with pain. It seemed to say:

"Poor fellow! It don't take much to make you happy!"

It was very plain that Tommy did not accept any one as priest but Barton Cathcart, and that the only thread by which his rugged nature could be led was the single golden strand of affection.

He grew daily weaker, and more and more crabbed. It was a hard task for Mother Taft. He poured out words like paving stones upon her. He would agree to nothing, and seemed likely to go out of the world like a shaggy bear seeking his northern covert for hybernation. On the first day of March it was, that Tommy Taft had been unquietly sleeping in the forenoon, to make up for a disturbed night. The little noisy clock,—that regarded itself as the essence of a Yankee, and ticked with immense alacrity, and struck in the most bustling and emphatic manner,—this industrious and moral clock began striking, whir-r-r, *one;* whir-r-r, *two;* whir-r-r, *three;* (Tommy jerked his head a little as if something vexed him in his sleep;) whir-r-r, *four;* whir-r-r, *five,* whir-r-r, *six;* ("Keep still, will ye? let me alone, old woman! d—— your medicine;") whir-r-r, *seven;* whir-r-r, *eight;* ("God in Heaven! as sure as I live," said Tommy, rubbing his eyes as if to make sure that they saw aright;) whir-r-r, *nine;* whir-r-r, *ten!* Then, holding out his arms with the simplicity of a child, his face fairly glowing with joy, and looking now really noble, he cried:

"Barton,—my boy, Barton,—I knew you wouldn't let the old man die, and not help him! I knew it! I knew it!"

After the first surprise of joy subsided, Tommy pushed Barton from the edge of his bed:

"Stand up, boy; turn round! There he is! Now I'm all right. Got my pilot aboard. Sealed orders—ready to sail the minit the hawser's let go."

After a few words about his return from the West, his health, and prospects, the old man returned to the subject that seemed to lie nearest his heart.

"They've all had a hand at me, Barton. There's twenty firms in this town that is willin' to give a feller sailin' orders, when they see he's out'ard bound. But I am an old salt—I know my owners!" said Tommy, with an affectionate wink at Barton.

"Oh, my boy, you're back agin; it's all right now. Don't you let me go wrong. I want you to tell me just where you're goin', and I'll bear right up for that port! You know, Barton, I never cheated you when you was a boy. I took care of ye, and never told you a lie in my life, and never got you in a scrape. You won't cheat an old man now, will ye?"

It was all that Barton could do to maintain his self-possession. Tears and smiles kept company on his face.

"My dear old Tommy, we won't part company. We're both bound to the same land. God will, I fervently hope, for Christ's sake, forgive all our sins, and make us meet for everlasting life!"

"Amen!" roared out the old man. "Go on. You *really* believe in it? Come here, Barton, sit down on the edge of the bed, look me in the face, and no flummery,—do you really believe that there's another world?"

"I do, Tommy, I believe it in my very soul!"

"That's enough! I believe it too, jest as sartain as if a shipmate had told me about an island I'd never seen, but he had."

"Now, Barton, give me the bearin's of't. D'ye believe that there's a Lord that helps a poor feller to it?"

"I do. Christ loves me, and you, and all of us. He is glorious in love; and for no other reason in the world than because He loves to do kind things, He saves all who trust Him."

"He don't stand on particulars, then? He won't rip up all a feller's old faults, will He?—or how's that? Don't you ease up on me, Barton, just to please me, but tell me the hardest on't. I believe every word you say."

Barton's own soul had travelled on the very road on which Tommy was now walking, and remembering his own experience, and some of those wonderful crystals which he had dug out of the ridges of the Old Testament, and which he had set in his memory with even more feeling than before, made up in part by the renewal of his own former experiences, he repeated to Tommy these words, saying to him:

"Tommy, if I was describing a man to you, you would take him to be just what I say, wouldn't you?"

"Sartain!"

"Well, this is God's nature. You are going toward him, and ought to know how to behave."

"That's as true as the compass. Did'nt I tell ye, old woman, when Barton came it would be plain sailin'?"

"'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The

Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

"'Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.'

"Then again, Tommy, hear this:

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the last of his heritage? he retained not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

"'He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.'"

"Now that's to the p'int, Barton. The Lord will tumble a feller's sins overboard like rubbish, or bilge-water and the like, when a ship is in the middle of the ocean? Well, it would puzzle a feller to find 'em agin after that. Is that all? I'm to report to Him?"

"Yes, Tommy; you are to report to God just as I should report to you if you were a ship owner, and I were the captain, and had made mistakes and losses on the voyage. Suppose you loved me just as you do now, and I were to come back to you and make a clean breast of it, what would you do to me?"

"Do? You know what I'd do? I'd say—Barton, hold your yawp; not another word atween us. I care more for *you* than for every d—— dollar of the cargo."

Barton did not stop for Tommy's adjectives.

"That's just what God says to us: 'All his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him.' 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God?'"

"Well, now, this is honorable! It makes a feller feel mean, though, Barton, when he's treated so, and then thinks what sort of a feller he's been."

Barton then read from the fifteenth chapter of Luke to the old man the parable of the prodigal son.

"Barton, would ye jest as lief do me a little favor as not?"

"What is it, Taft?"

"Would ye mind sayin' a little prayer—for me—it makes no difference, of course; but jest a line of introduction in a foreign port sometimes helps a feller amazingly."

Barton knelt by the bedside and prayed. Without reflecting at the moment on Uncle Tommy's particular wants, Barton was following in prayer the line of his own feelings; when, suddenly, he felt Tommy's finger gently poking his head.

"I say, Barton, ain't you steerin' a p'int or two off the course? I don't seem to follow you."

A few earnest, simple petitions followed, which Taft seemed to relish.

"Lord forgive Tommy Taft's sins! ("Now you've hit it," said the old man, softly.) Prepare him for Thy kingdom. ("Yes, and Barton, too!") May he feel Thy love, and trust his soul in Thy sacred keeping. ("Ah, ha! that's it—you're in the right spot now.") Give him peace while he lives. ("No matter about that—the doctor'll give me opium for that! go on.") And, at his death, save his soul in Thy kingdom, for Christ's sake. Amen."

"Amen. But did'nt you coil it away rather too quick?"

The fact was, that Barton was not used to the office of public prayer, and still less to the running commentaries of Tommy Taft, which, though helpful to the old man, were of no assistance to Barton.

"Now, Barton, my boy, you've done a good thing. I've been waitin' for you all winter, and you did'nt come a minit too soon. I'm tired now; but I want you to come back to-morrow. I've got somethin' to tell you. I never let you know nothin' about my life, and I've a mind to tell you. Oh, it was a cruel shame for my uncle to treat me so! I might have made a man if I'd had half a chance. No matter. But I want to say one thing: Barton, when I'm gone, you won't let the old woman suffer? She's had a pretty hard time of it with me. She's like a sparrow that builds its nest in a thorn bush. I knew you would. One thing more, Barton," said the old man, his voice sinking almost to a whisper, as if speaking a secret from the bottom of his soul, "Barton, you know I never had much money. I never laid up any—couldn't. Now you won't let me come on to the town for a funeral—wil' ye? I should hate to be buried in a pine coffin, at town expense and have folks laugh that did'nt dare open their head to me when I was 'round town! And then, Barton, you'll put old Smasher in with me! .Of course, it ain't any matter, but I'd rather take my leg along, if it's all the same to other folks!"

Barton could not forbear smiling, as the old man, growing visibly feebler every hour, went on revealing traits which his sturdy pride had covered when he was in health.

"And, Barton, I wish you'd let the children come when I'm buried. They'll come if you'll just let 'em know. Always trust the children! And—(pain here checked his utterance for a moment)—and, let's see, what was I saying? Oh, the children. I don't want nothin' said. But if you'd jest as lief let the children sing one of their hymns, I should relish it."

The color came suddenly to his cheek, and left as suddenly. He pressed his hand over his stomach, and leaned his head further over on his pillow, as if to wait till the pang passed. It seemed long. Barton rose and leaned over him. The old man opened his eyes, and with a look of ineffable longing, whispered:

"Kiss me."

A faint smile dwelt about his mouth; his faced relaxed and seemed to express happiness in its rugged features. But the old man was not there. Without sound of wings, or footfall, he had departed on his last journey

CHAPTER XL.

FAITH REKINDLED.

On their way home from the burial, Judge Bacon, Parson Buell, Dr. Wentworth, and Barton Cathcart walked together, talking of the old man and the funeral. The whole town seemed to have turned out. It was even proposed to use the church, not so much in respect for the dead as for the living. Few families were there where Mother Taft had not ministered, and there was unusual sympathy for her now. But she and Barton, who assumed the arrangements, thought it wiser that Tommy Taft should go to his grave from the homely quarters where he had lived. A prayer was made, a hymn sung, and, if Tommy heard it, his spirit could not but have been content with the number and sweetness of the children's voices. There were enough people, now that he was gone, to say kind things of him, and to apologize for his eccentricities.

"I have always been of opinion," said Judge Bacon, "that Taft would have been a man of great power in society if he had been subject to early training and fortunate circumstances. The rough material was in him, and education might have shaped it to the proportions of an uncommon manhood."

"You were with him, Barton, when he died—did he seem to have any proper conception of the solemn event?" inquired Dr. Buell.

Barton's account of his interview was striking. There was a moment's silence. Judge Bacon remarked, breaking it:

"I suspect that it is all right with Tommy. No doubt, the good Lord was merciful."

"God's mercies and man's saving evidences are not to be confounded," said Parson Buell. "All that man can do is to inquire whether, in the judgment of charity, one's life or dying experience, gives evidence of gracious affections. Tommy Taft's character was marked with many strong excellences, but he would be bold who should say that his was a Christian life."

'But do you not think there is some evidence that, at last, he was led to put faith in the Saviour?" said Barton.

"My own pastoral visits developed nothing particularly encouraging," replied Dr. Buell. "Your narrative is certainly more hopeful. Yet, I should speak of a sudden dying experience with great caution. It would be mischievous for men to suppose that a whole life, perverse and worldly, can be rubbed out like a slate, by a momentary glow of feeling, in the last hour. I should think, Barton, that his experience was more a manifestation of affection for you than for his God."

"Since there is no positive evidence," said Dr. Wentworth, "of his condition, let us charitably hope that the spark which glowed at the last was not quenched in death. He humbled himself to Barton for very love. He followed him to Christ. True love is mediatorial. If to any state of mind God would reveal himself, it would be to love and submission. It was not regular. What repentance is ever logical? Will a shepherd refuse a returned sheep because it followed home a bell-wether, instead of the shepherd's own call?"

"I perceive, gentlemen, with all due submission to your superior gifts," said Judge Bacon, blandly smiling and waving his hand with a gesture that seemed to put away the whole discussion, "that your wisdom increases as your knowledge fails. Poor Taft is gone. That is all you know about it. But no! You mount up above all facts, logic, or vision, and one weaves for him a garment of salvation while the other pulls out the stitches! Ah, what tailors of cloud-clothes you would make! If Taft had been a deacon, or a minister, of course we should have to let him go in. As he was a rough old sailor, with a hard tongue——"

Barton interposed with some slight asperity:

"Do you think that a smooth tongue and a hard heart would have served him better than a rough tongue and a warm heart?"

"A thousand pardons, my young friend," said the judge, accepting with perfect good nature the implied comparison,—"I yield, I yield. I shall put Tommy into the calendar, and hereafter swear by St. Taft. He excelled in the grace of swearing!"

"I fear that he was profane," said Parson Buell, "though not in my presence."

"No? I am surprised!" returned the judge. "However, swearing is for the most part a mere rhetorical enforcement—a system of interjections, in bad taste because of exaggeration. There is much pious swearing. A church-member slips on the ice, and exclaims, 'goodness, now!' Tommy Taft would have said, '*d—— it!*' Both meant the same thing. A bold man *means* swear, and says it. A timid man means swear, but says 'gracious!' All interjections are swearing, a kind of latent oaths, are they not, parson?"

"Swear not at all; let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay," said Buell. "No doubt many common by-words are only a sort of cowardly profanity. But the guilt of profane swearing is not lessened by calling it an interjection, or by raising the culpableness of by-words."

"Well, well, Doctor or Minister, whichever of you conquers, I perceive that both of you in your hearts have put Tommy in heaven, and that he is as well off as if he had died at a stake a martyr for religion."

"By no means," replied Buell. "There are infinite degrees of excellence and of happiness in heaven. One may enter as a king, crowned; another enters 'so as by fire.' One emigrant may come on to the coast by shipwreck, saving nothing but his life; and another, after a prosperous voyage, lands, with his goods, among friends that had come over before him. Both are safe; but one is a pauper, and the other well advanced in society. Let us reverently hope that Taft, at the last, beheld and accepted the Saviour. But that by no means places him at the side of those whose earthly life was a long career of virtue and self-denial."

"Bereavement," said Dr. Wentworth, "is a great heretic. I I have found few persons who do not contrive to believe that *their* friends are saved. It is other people's friends that we remit to justice. Our own are, by some mediation of affection and grief, rescued. Indeed the *Infinite* and the *Eternal* are words without meaning till grief interprets them. Tears are like chemical re-agents, whose touch brings out colors. When, bearing our beloved in our arms, we come face to face with eternity, all our reasonings retreat into our hearts. Men do not deny their beliefs. But they will not let them speak. Like light in a sick room, they must be turned down and softened, and sometimes, before the morning comes, they go out."

"Truth," replied Buell, "is not less true because our sympathies flow out against it. The sun shines on in spite of weak eyes. Has a man a right to put a bandage on his eyes and call it sunset?"

They had reached Dr. Wentworth's mansion, and all turned in thither. It was a bright, but coldly blustering day. The hickory fire cheerily blazed on the hearth. The conservatory door stood wide open, and the eye discerned an artificial summer there, whose greenness and beauty was now, after the long winter, inexpressibly attractive. The azalias were coming into bloom. Exquisite ferns of various tropical kinds grew with luxuriance. There was a summery feeling in the room. Its light, its warmth, and the sight of plants and flowers all helped the illusion. A canary bird hanging in the conservatory sang merrily, and one or two flies buzzed against the window, or flew dreamily through the air. After a long winter, a fly in the house brings with it a sense of summer. If old and torpid, we take it in hand, blow warm breath upon it, put sugar before it. Imagine a man doing all that to a fly in August!

Judge Bacon could not tarry, and waited only till the flowers which the doctor was cutting for the ladies were arranged, and then departed. But not till he had enjoined all further discussion.

"When Buell and I meet you, Wentworth, you always seem moved with talk. Why, if all that you have discoursed to me, to say nothing of Buell, were written in a book, of what dimensions would it already be! I know very well what you are both thinking of. Buell wants to say now that your doctrine of *Nature* is injurious to *Scripture*. Then you, Doctor, are full of a reply, viz.: that the globe, but particularly the human mind, by its best specimens, *is* a previous, or co-ordinate, or auxiliary revelation. Then Buell will snap you up with the question, 'Do you bring the Bible down to the level of Nature?' and you will answer, 'No, I attempt to raise nature up to the level of the Bible.' Then he will say, 'What do you mean by *Nature?*' and you will reply, 'Whatever God has created, but chiefly the human mind.' Then Buell will look very sober—he always does—but he will look soberer yet, and trust that you are not going off into mere natural religion. Then you will say that you prefer natural to unnatural religion. He will then look hurt, and you will grow dignified. Then after a while Doctor Buell will very mildly ask whether you think the deductions of science are upon an equality with the doctrines of Christ? and you will say they are infinitely below them—not because they are science, but from the nature of the truths themselves, one relating to matter, and the other to the soul. Whereupon he will introduce a question in mental philosophy, and you will snatch it away from him, and then he will get it away from you, until, before you know it, the clock will strike *twelve*—midnight! and then every thing will be left just as it was before, to be gone over again at some future meeting.

"Ah, there is nothing so improving as philosophical discussion! But my health suffers from such luxuries, and I must deny myself and bid you good evening." And with a courtly manner the judge bowed himself out.

"A most agreeable and discriminating scoffer," said Dr. Buell, as the door closed.

"Oh no, not scoffer, which implies something bitter or malignant. I think he has a conscience, and that, in spite of his badinage, he is not without serious thoughts and purposes."

The tea was announced. Barton sat in the place which Rose usually occupied, Dr. Buell sat next to Agate Bissell, and the children, great and little, filled up the interstices between the doctor and his wife. Barton gave some account of his western experiences—some further facts relating to Tommy Taft. He appeared unusually vivacious. Dr. Wentworth remarked afterward to his wife that he had never known young Cathcart to be so buoyant and modestly self-confident. He seemed like one who had seen trouble, but had found peace.

Leaving Dr. Buell with the ladies—to whom, and to Agate in particular, he was laying open some plans for usefulness—Barton and Dr. Wentworth repaired to the study.

Barton began:

"I do not feel, as Dr. Buell does, that your views of God's use of Nature as a revelation tend to unsettle faith. In my own case, it has led me back to my childhood faith again. I was brought up, in effect though not in theory, to look upon Nature as something dangerous, having no relation to religious feelings, and indeed, as a storehouse of infidel dangers. I had never heard a minister employ nature as an auxiliary of the Bible, as if there had been not one, but a converging series of revelations, all witnessing to the same truths, but in differing degrees of clearness, the full light and disclosure coming in Christ Jesus!"

The doctor answered:

"And yet the Old Testament is a storehouse of religious feeling excited by the objects in Nature. The Psalms of David play upon all the aspects of nature familiar to Palestine, and summon every living thing to bear witness to God. But many ministers seem to think that Nature has a secret grudge against the Bible, and they are determined that they will defend the Bible against its insidious aggressions.

"In making the world, many seem to think, God saved up the best truths, refusing to let Nature shadow them, reserving them for a written book. But Paul thought otherwise, declaring that God framed the world for the purpose of revealing himself and his government to man. 'For the invisible things (truths) of Him are clearly seen from (in) the creation of the world—being understood by the things that are made, even to his eternal power and Godhead.'"

"I am almost certain, Doctor, that but for your help I should have made shipwreck of my faith. I had come to a state in which nothing was true to me merely because the Bible said so; but when, under your help, I found the great truths of the Bible indicated and corroborated in Nature, I was wonderfully strengthened. Indeed, I consider that the turning point in my history."

"There are a variety of influences which make religious difficulties almost a disease," said Dr. Wentworth. "A person cannot ravel out the threads of religious belief which from his childhood have woven the figures of taste, fancy, affection, and reasor itself, without doing a violence to his nature which few have th strength to survive.

"The process is itself destructive, but it is made worse by the dium attached to scepticism—especially in New England, where it is deemed the mother of all immorality. This public sentiment is either to be dared or evaded. If defied, it soon drives a man desperate by its inflictions. If to avoid this, one is prudently silent, his mind grows hot and morbid by speculations which he supposes to be purely intellectual, whereas they are a mixture of intense feelings, of fancies, and of unregulated reasonings—a medley, as far from philosophy as possible, but peculiarly well calculated to produce morbid conditions both of body and soul."

Barton replied:

"I need no testimony on that point. I now wonder, as I look back, that my reason was spared. But it was in some respects this very intensity of suffering that worked a cure. I became satisfied that the reasonings of those men whose steps I was following, if carried forward legitimately and fearlessly, would not stop with discrediting a revelation, but would go on to discredit the existence of a God. The question came home—are you prepared to follow out your reasonings, and to give up faith in the existence of any God? Since no man can prove that God does not exist, I found that I should vibrate like a pendulum between Theism and Atheism, and that I should have my convictions just as little settled as before, only I should be unsettled in a different place; I should be acting in that remote region just as uncertainly and insincerely as before I had sacrificed my Christian faith."

"Certain natures must ferment," said Dr. Wentworth. "They do not become clear or deep till after a process of that kind. But I have noticed a great many men who went no further than to drop their faith in Christianity, which, as it is now held, represents not only the mere words of Christ, but all the experiences which have since sprung from these words, in good men, and so is the substance and epitome of all the moral good which the world has learned. They were not honest enough to go on with their principles to the logical result, and became torpid or frivolous skeptics, without moral depth or moral honesty."

—"It was at the point of this rebound in me, from the darkness and horror of atheism, that I was helped, to a degree of which you were never conscious, by an almost accidental train of conversation illustrating the difference between the essential truths of revelation and the vehicles of these truths. I had been sticking at a great many of the so-called difficulties of the scriptures. I pricked up my ears at your illustrations. You said, 'If a messenger were to come to a poor man, saying, "I bear in my hand the will of a relative of your mother's. He has left you an estate, and here are the documents which will put you in possession,"—a sensible man would at once, upon a tolerably fair showing, take the documents and test them. He would see if they had been recorded; if there was such property; if, upon presenting his claims, it was made over to him. But what if, instead of regarding *possession* as the best argument in favor of the genuineness of the will, he should indicate his philosophy and shrewdness by picking flaws with the grammar, quarrelling with the messenger, instituting a special plea on the doctrine of probabilities in the case?' Out of that view came great relief to me. I said, 'Here is the will and Testament of my Father. Let me take possession of the contents rather than criticise them.' I considered the New Testament ideal of human life—its pattern of character, its delineation of the ends of a true life, its code of moral sentiments—and said to myself. 'Is there any thing nobler than this? Has nature any thing better to teach me?' I considered the conception formed in Scripture of God, his universal Fatherhood, his Remedial Nature as manifested in Christ, the whole, as it now seems to me, a marvellous and transcendent picture of excellence; and I contrasted this positive, effulgent sympathetic Being, with that uncertain, protean, pulseless, soulless Solitude which Pantheism and Atheism call God. The contrast was salutary. It really brought my pride and my moral sense over on to the ground of my childhood belief! It seemed to me that such fruit could be found growing nowhere else, and that to refuse it was as if a man should refuse oranges because the tree was crooked, or the bark diseased, or the thorns too long and too sharp.

"In connection with this, came to my relief this view: 'I am undertaking to construct a theory of the universe as the condition precedent to my own life. But I have a personal duty. I have to develop a character, to perform my part in society, to be a man among men. Am I at liberty to defer this until I have put Time, History and the Globe to analysis and synthesis? If right living is immediate, urgent, the duty of to-day, then I must take the best ideals that exist, and work them out.' But that view brought me right back to the New Testament, and I could not help saying to myself, 'What book is this which an earnest man, desiring to live high and noble life, finds at every turn supplying him with the very elements which he needs? Is it not the Book of Life?'

"There came, finally, one experience further. When I was most imbued with the truth as I found it in Christ, most tender in my feelings, I seemed to have, on various occasions, borne in upon me a tide of influences which I could account for on no theory of ordinary causation, and which I have come to believe was divine. The spirit was promised. To me it has been fulfilled.

"I have not got beyond difficulties. I cannot answer certain technical questions arising in my mind respecting Revelation. I am more than dubious of much of the philosophy in which religious truth is clothed in the pulpit. But this I know—I have found the road to Manhood; I know my duty to society; I have a sure faith in immortality; I behold the glory of a God worthy to be praised. I accept as my guide, friend and Saviour, his Son, the Redeemer of the world. And I believe that he gives forth to me the Holy Spirit. I never could have said as much as this to any one but to you. For you, sir, have had more influence in restraining my aberration, and in establishing points of cure in me, than all others."

A pause followed this conversation. Tears rolled down the doctor's face. The clock on the mantel chimed the hour. The fire snapped and showered its sparks up the chimney. There needed no words. Silence is sometimes the most perfect communion.

CHAPTER XLI.

CHANGE OF LATITUDE.

It was on an overcast day early in March that Heywood entered Charleston harbor. It was not that low and smothering cloudiness which shuts in and diminishes a prospect, but one of those gray, lowering skies which cause every thing to loom up and to seem larger and grander than they appear in the white flat light of the sun. Heywood was on deck, and as the channel carried them nearly parallel with Morris Island, the captain pointed out the lines of batteries that were night and day in process of construction. For Major Anderson, on the 26th of December, 1860, acting upon his own military judgment, had abandoned Fort Moultrie, upon Sullivan's Island, on the north side of the harbor, and had conveyed his whole force to Sumter, a fort rising on every side right out of the water, and not accessible to assault, as was Fort Moultrie from its land side. This judicious movement took the authorities by surprise. Had Beauregard been then in command in Charleston, it is hardly possible that the opportunity would have been left open for Major Anderson to secure a position far better suited to the number of his men than Moultrie, in better repair, and removed from all danger of surprise.

The surprise at this movement was the greater because it had been believed that Major Anderson, a Southerner by birth, would ultimately come over to the Southern cause; or, at any rate, perform his duty in such a manner as not to molest the plans of the Confederacy.

To reduce Fort Sumter would require the erection of many batteries. No other spot in the harbor of Charleston could have been selected where a fort that commanded the entrance could be itself so dominated from every side by batteries on the shore.

As the steamer neared this fort, all eyes were turned toward this centre of attraction, and opinions were exchanged among officers and passengers as to the probable fate of its garrison. So little was then known of war, and especially of improved artillery, that the most extravagant opinions were expressed both on the one side and on the other. Heywood felt the tears rising to his eyes as he looked upon the stars and stripes waving over the fort. His soul revolted against the folly and crime of those who should dare to touch that sacred emblem of the country's glory! As he stood gazing, he unconsciously said aloud, "God keep thee, flag of my fathers!"

"You, a Virginian," said the captain, "and praying for that Northern flag? I am a Southern man, and if I lived in Charleston I would have that rag down as soon as powder and shot could fetch it down! You'll see that palmetto flag yonder waving over these bricks before many weeks!"

Heywood turned to look at the flag toward which the captain pointed as he spoke. It was too distant to be clearly discerned. But, through the captain's glass he saw over Castle Pinckney, and now over Moultrie, the State flag of South Carolina. His heart sickened. He turned and walked away. The gray sky—the dark and scowling water—signs of a coming storm—all seemed to him in keeping with the events approaching. To himself he said: "Have I lived to see the day when the government and its flag will be assailed with war? Do I dream? Or is this a hideous reality? Well may the heaven hide its brightness, and the storm wail. A mightier storm will soon burst?"

Heywood soon landed and repaired to his hotel; nor did he regret that the day and night were stormy, as he desired to get settled in his quarters before going out or presenting his letters. On rising the next morning his senses were soothed and delighted with the fragrance of the air and the genial temperature of the atmosphere. It almost shakes one's sense of personal identity to be changed by a short voyage of a few days from snows and frosts into the midst of growing gardens and blossoming fields. Early March here answered to late May in New England. The roses and honeysuckles were in blossom. Even his Virginian home had no such luxuriant growths as he witnessed here. The Lamarque rose, the Chromatella, the various Noisettes and Tea roses which he had been wont to see grown under glass, or, if out of doors, subject every winter to frosts which pruned them to the ground, here grew from year to year in open gardens, becoming large and luxuriant, and hanging in clusters of magnificent buds and blossoms in wonderful profusion.

He strolled through the streets to gain some general idea of the city. The finest dwellings, however, seemed half hidden by high brick walls around the yards. Over the tops hung many a vine, or clump of climbing rose. Now and then some open gate, or some more generous and open fence, enabled him to look through and see beds of early bulbs in full blossom, the long glossy leaves of laurel, the deep green and polished leaves of the Pettisporum, and the Cape Jessamine.

The air was delicious. It was perfumed and balmy. Heywood strolled on from street to street in the early morning with unaffected delight. Suddenly he was challenged by a sentinel, and warned off from bounds which he was just crossing. It was a camp of Georgia troops just come from Savannah. His heart sickened. With hastening steps he returned to his hotel. The front was already swarming with citizens, and among them many military men. He began fully to realize that Charleston was a foreign city! He was in his own land and yet not under his own government! He was, however, not regarded as a stranger. Not only was his father known, but his zeal in the cause of the State was known also; and young Heywood, on presenting his letters, found himself welcomed to the best society of the city. It was taken for granted that a young Virginian of such lineage as his, would cast in his lot with instant enthusiasm with the exultant and glorious movement for Southern independence. But he can best tell his own experience in a sort of journal letter which he kept for Judge Bacon, who leaned to the Southern views far more than did any of Heywood's other friends, and who, therefore, was relied upon for advice with more confidence than they would be whose identification with the North would of necessity give one color to all their counsel.

* * * "You can imagine the state of feeling here by nothing which you read or hear in the North. It was the opinion of many in Massachusetts that much that was done and said here was merely for political effect. I confess to have had the same notion; but I have it no longer. These people are in terrible earnest. I do not seem to myself to be in the same country or nation as when at the North. If every man I met talked to me in a foreign language, he would hardly be more an alien. Nowhere in the city or harbor, except at Fort Sumter, is the flag of

the United States flying; everywhere it is the Palmetto flag! The people are intensely exhilarated—there is no resisting such a current. I am no more a secessionist than I was in Norwood; and yet, as every one takes it for granted that I am heart and soul with him, I reproach myself with my insincerity or moral cowardice. Every night, when I reflect on the whirl and excitement of the day, I am ashamed that I do not show my colors. But one must be brave indeed who would deliberately leap into the fire. It would be scarcely less than this to avow sincere attachment to the Union. I have seen one act of ferocity and heard of others, which for the sake of the South I will not repeat. But I am determined, at all hazards, to state to some of the leading gentlemen my true convictions. * * * * *

"Since I have made known to my father's friends my Unionism, if it were possible, I am treated with more cordiality than ever. I am not only invited to social gatherings and made much of, but my friends take me with them to their political consultations. I am thus put in possession of the secret counsels of the leading Southern men. I am in despair of the Union, in so far as South Carolina is concerned. And the letters and messages from other States seem to give assurance of cordial coöperation. My future looks dark to me. * * * *

"I wish you could have been with me last night! I have had the inside view. I am less sanguine of future union than ever. After much importunity, Major Anderson has consented to send an officer to Washington, with a committee of citizens, to induce the Government to withdraw its troops from the fort. Lieut. Hall is the officer. But he says distinctly to the committee that he shall advise his Government to maintain their possession of the fort. In hope of changing his view, and of convincing him that there is no chance whatever of Union, and that secession is a fact accomplished and ended, the managers here last night arranged a meeting for conference, and as my case needed treatment also, I was brought in.

"Mr. ——— said, frankly, at the opening of the conference, that he should speak without disguise. It was something in this wise:

"'The people of the North and South are essentially different. There is no hope of their assimilation. Their climate, industries, political opinions, social customs, cause, and will maintain these differences. It is useless to try and conduct a Government together. Perpetual disagreement and jangling must follow. He said that the thoughtful political men of South Carolina had long been satisfied of the soundness of these views. *That they were fully determined at all hazards to separate from the North.* It was not a sudden freak, but a matured purpose. Was it not better then, instead of patching, or dosing a desperate case, to yield to the inevitable? That no compromise was possible, simply because there were no special grievances which the South need complain of. That, to speak frankly, their grievances had been urged merely as the method of holding their people, but that the thinking men did not regard them as of any value. But the real motive lay in the prospect of a future which could not be realized without separation. To make new arrangements, to devise peace measures, concessions, compromises, was to prescribe for the wrong disease. The South really had no grievances whatever. But it *had* ambitions, and was determined to realize them Under these circumstances, and in view of these disclosures, was it not wise for Lieut. Hall to join with the committee in saying to the Government at Washington that the stay of troops in the harbor could serve no useful purpose?'

"I do not know what Lieut. Hall will do, but my eyes are open. Can it be that these things are true beyond the bounds of South Carolina? I am sure that in my own State it is not so. Virginia is true to the Union. But what if the flames that are here kindled should spread? What if my own State should go with the seven already seceded? Can I fight against my own State? Can I join my kindred and fight against the Government? Can I remain neutral, and let this great issue be settled by others, striking neither for the Union nor for my State?

"*March* 25.—I have been making a tour of the batteries with Gen. Beauregard. If I had ever thought that Sumter could long resist the bombardment which threatens her, I should be disabused of such opinions after seeing what I have to-day! Every point of and from which a battery can be made to bear on Sumter has been seized. Great numbers of men are perfecting the works. Huge cannon are lying under cover and waiting the completion of the works. In many batteries cannon are already mounted. In

Fort Moultrie, the artillery destroyed by the garrison when they took possession of Fort Sumter, has been replaced. Every thing is approaching completion. March is wearing away; April is just at hand. Every effort has been made to induce Mr. Lincoln to withdraw the garrison, and thus avoid a collision. But I am told that he is obstinate, not to say deceitful. Again and again, he has either promised, or left upon those who have visited him the impression that a promise was given; yet the flag waves there —a defiance to the Confederate flags which fly from the beleaguering forts and batteries.

"As I stood upon the parapet of Fort Johnson this afternoon, the wind freshened and rolled out the flag from over Fort Sumter with that peculiar motion which gives one a feeling that there is life in the flag, and that it stretches out its arms from some volition of its own. It lifted itself from its drooping position, half disclosed its form, and then languidly relapsed again. Again, and with more impetus, it raised itself, rolling out heavily in a series of convolutions, as if it felt an inward struggle or spasm. It drooped again. Then, though I felt no quickening wind where I stood, it was plain that a current moved high in the air, in which, with a certain calm force, it was lifted up and stretched out at full, with all its stripes displayed, and so it held itself without recoil or droop.

"I inwardly said, 'So it shall be. After some struggles the banner shall stand at last, spread abroad in full glory!'

"Beauregard, too, had watched the same scene. I know not what his thoughts were. He seemed pensive. There is a singular combination in his expression. His face is dull, his eyes fiery, so that his whole countenance is like ashes, with fire raked up beneath it.

"With some emphasis he said:

"'It shall not fly there long.'

"I asked him whether it did not pain him to do violence to the flag under which he had been reared? He paused, as one does who analyzes his feelings before speaking:

"'In our fathers' day that was the flag of the Union. But it has been made sectional by Northern fanaticism. It no longer suggests protection and friendship, but injustice and aggression. We look upon it as it is, not as it was. And yet, sir, if Major

Anderson would evacuate the fort, and relieve this harbor of the threat implied in his presence here, I should be saved a painful necessity.'

"'Then you do not sympathize with those who wish to humble the North?'

"'I sympathize with those who believe that a new empire is arising! I care nothing for the North. Let them have their way. We mean to fulfil our destiny. All nature has conspired to make this southern realm a grand empire. The climate is perfect. It is a garden on the pattern of a continent! We have an industry which will enrich the world—but ourselves first and most. Ours is not a rude and clumsy slavery like that of antiquity. It combines in it the patriarchal simplicity of the Hebrew and the fine organization of the Roman. The negro not held in slavery spreads out like a torpid swamp and poisons the land with laziness. We have forced him into channels—converted him, as it were, into a river, with a regular current, turning a thousand mills. Our people, relieved from drudgery, have leisure for refinement and public administration. Here is to be a new era—an epoch in civilization. In a hundred years the great schools of science and of painting, the colleges and universities of America will be here! When I see that flag standing in the way of all this glorious progress, and forbidding it, I would fire upon it if it were thrice as glorious as it has been, but has ceased to be!'

"I think he was sincere. He is an enthusiast. He has the air of a man who has great self-confidence and is not unwilling to express it. On that account he is fit to represent the South Carolinians. They are certainly eager, opinionative, and prodigiously confident. I inquired:

"'Will it be a difficult task to breach the fort, and likely to be attended with much loss of life?'

"He replied:

"'We and they are well protected from artillery fire. Anderson is a good officer and will not expose his men. If blood is spilt, it will be in storming after the fort is breached.'

"'Will raw troops be serviceable in so desperate an enterprise as assailing a breach?'

"'Sir, the Southerner is a natural soldier! His courage is such, by nature, that it is hardly a credit to him to be brave, any more than for a horse to be strong, or a hound swift. The Northern man is dull, slow, peaceful. If ever, it will be years before he learns to fight. The Southern soldier is quick, fiery, intense, overwhelming. We shall sweep every thing before us!'

"'Is there no way of avoiding actual conflict? Might not the fort be starved out? I am told that the garrison are not permitted to draw provisions any longer from Charleston.'

"So far as I am concerned, I would defer operations, provided Anderson would state the day when want of provisions would compel him to surrender; at any rate, if it were a near day.'

"'I am sure he would. He is an honorable and Christian gentleman. I would cheerfully undertake the mission. I am a Southern man, but I am opposed utterly to forcing this issue by arms.'

"'This is beyond my province. You must get authority from Montgomery, or from Gov. Pickens.'

"Filled with this errand, I desired to hasten back to Charleston. The sun was already low down in the west, and flamed across the harbor with wonderful beauty. The channel guard-boats were under way to their night-watch on the bar, that no vessels might steal in for the relief of the fort. To the seaward, the harbor opened out grandly. The atmosphere, the setting sun, the meeting of the harbor with the ocean, gave a largeness to the scene which filled my heart with admiration. As I was looking, the sun sank. Then Sumter fired a gun, and the flag slowly and gracefully descended. In rapid succession, the flag over our head, that of Fort Moultrie, of Castle Pinckney, and of every fort and battery around the harbor, came silently down, and twilight seemed like a peacemaker! All the tokens of defiance and war were wrapped in quick-coming darkness. The little steamer on which we returned sped toward the city, whose outlines were lost in the dusk, but painted again in the lights which shot out along either shore and from beyond the White Point Garden. The few craft that lay off at anchor showed each a solitary light. We saw them, shot past them, and left them behind, in the same moment. My heart was happy in the strange hope that I might at least contribute in a small degree to avert a collision.

"Without delay I sought out Gov. Pickens and suggested the plan. He met me cordially, but hesitated on hearing my errand He spoke of consulting the Government at Montgomery.

"'But, sir, if South Carolina is sovereign enough to withdraw from the Union, and to repel the soldiers of the Union from her shores, she is sovereign enough to negotiate a peaceful evacuation of Fort Sumter.'

"'Oh, there's authority enough. I would take it anyhow but it may not be expedient.'

"'Expedient! I do not understand you.'

"'Well, to be plain, it may be necessary to come to blows for political considerations. If all the Southern States would promptly move into line, we could get along without bloodshed. But then we have but six or seven, out of fifteen, that have acted. This sluggishness will ruin us. We can't afford to wait. If the tide slacks and turns it will carry all our hopes out to sea with it, never to return; but once let the Government at Washington fire one gun upon ship or man, and that flash will set on fire the whole South! Some of us are in favor of bringing on the issue by striking; others, by waiting till we are struck. By noon to-morrow I shall know. Come then and I will see you. Meantime, our friends are in the parlors to-night. The sons of Virginia are always welcome in Charleston!'

"I plead fatigue, and hastened back to my lodgings, and have saved myself from many unpleasant musings by writing this account to you.

"The clouds are very dark. While I was in Norwood I thought them wind-clouds, of threatening look and harmless contents. Now they are lurid with fire, and portend terrible disaster, if some happy expedient does not succeed in conveying the electricity silently to the ground!

"The whole city is feverish and inflammable. It seems to me that a spark would explode the community. Moderation is unknown. It is dangerous not to burn and glow with hatred of the Union. To resist secession would be fatal. I keep aloof from all but a select few, and their prominent position, their very leadership in this disruptive movement, gives me standing and character, which I maintain by holding my peace, and so get the additional credit of being deep and cautious!"

CHAPTER XLII.

BOMBARDMENT OF FORT SUMTER.—HEYWOOD'S LETTER CONTINUED.

"*April* 10.—I am informed to-day, by Governor Pickens, that he has word from the Government at Washington, that provisions are to be sent to Fort Sumter at all hazards, and that he has communicated the same to his Government at Montgomery. There is great excitement. I urged the plan already mentioned Anderson cannot hold out many days. Starvation will give the fort into their hands full as soon as artillery can. Unless bloodshed is needed for some political purpose, I cannot imagine a reason for bombarding. Meanwhile the city swarms with troops arriving with every train, while those hitherto camping here have been distributed to the forts and batteries. Business is almost dead. It seems like a military holiday. The current for secession and a Southern Republic rushes like a mighty stream. Nothing can stay it, and nothing resist. It amounts, if not to a phrensy, yet to an irresistible enthusiasm. Every one is exhilarated. The most extravagant pictures are drawn of the future of this new empire. Last night I heard several of the leading men and managers of affairs discussing the prospect. 'Bombard the fort—commit the State irrevocably by shedding blood. The Government at Washington cannot do less than to threaten coercion. The first step in that direction will bring every cotton-growing State to our side. If the conflict begins, even the border States must come to this side. Against such a front no war will ever be made.' Turning to me, one of the gentlemen said: 'You shrink at the shedding of blood. Is it not better, by the loss of a few lives, and the consolidation thereby of fifteen States, *to prevent war*, than by temporizing to go at length into a conflict which, though not doubtful in issue, will sacrifice hundreds, and it may be thousands of lives? Even humanity would dictate decisive measures.'

"I replied: 'I think, gentlemen, that you mistake the whole feeling of the North. If the flag is fired upon there will be war. If there is war, you must prepare yourselves for a long and terrible one. The South will not yield easily. The North will be even more tenacious.'

"Some of the gentlemen were curious to know more of my opinion of the North, which I gave. But the majority laughed to scorn the idea of Northern courage. What is most singular is, that the men who most doubt Northern fighting qualities were themselves from the North, or were born of Northern parents! One or two fiery spirits declared, that with a thousand picked men, they could march from Charleston to New York; that there were more in number in the North who would greet them than would fight, and that in less than a year peace would be established. The meeting broke up, and as we walked together, I again and with warmth urged upon Governor Pickens to use his influence to prevent actual hostilities. I know not why, with my sentiments plainly disclosed, I am treated with so much confidence by gentlemen who are in the most secret councils of secession. But so it is. He replied to my importunity:

"'Heywood, I honor your fidelity to your convictions, and I do not wonder at your opinions respecting the North. Yet, you are Southern, and you will be obliged to join us. Events will prove stronger than men's wills.'

"'But not, I trust, than men's principles.'

"'All honest men agree in principles. It is the *application* of principles that creates a difference of opinion upon public affairs. For instance: You believe in justice, and so do I. But what *is* just? That is the question between the North and South. We believe in *humanity*. But which is the surest way of being humane? Sometimes forbearance will constitute humanity. Sometimes aggression is more humane than peace. To fire upon Sumter will prevent a civil war. You think not. It is not a difference of principles, but of judgment. You believe that the happiness of the population will be consulted by unity of national life. We believe that two nations are better than one. We agree as to the principle, viz., the duty of seeking the happiness of the people We differ as to means only. I say that you are one of us. I mean that your sympathies go with the land of your birth. Events are happening that will draw the lines, and all men will have to choose sides. The time is close at hand. It will be impossible for you, when you see that the rupture cannot be prevented, to take sides against your father and kindred, against your State, against all your companions, and against the South, and all its glorious future! Your honor and your affection will compel the right course. And it is this certainty which induces me to confide in you.'

"He then laid open to me the whole inside view, and I confess that my heart sank within me, as he closed, and I felt a gloomy certainty that the nation was rent in twain.'

"'There are,' said he, 'among the active and influential men in the South three classes. First, are the old politicians, who do not want secession, and threaten it only to secure for the South certain further concessions which shall prolong its political ascendency. They are dull and selfish men. They foresee nothing and plan nothing, except the possession of political power.

"'Next is the great middle class, containing the active young men, and most of the families of wealth throughout the South They threaten secession, and even welcome it, but with a distinct understanding among themselves that it is the shortest road to a *reconstructed Union.* They all hold to the antiquated superstition of a single Nation. When once the South is organized, and its government recognized, then, they reason, will begin a process of disintegration of the Northern Union, and of the absorption of its particles by the Southern Union. One by one the Northwestern States will dissolve their connection with their government, and come under our new Constitution. Pennsylvania will not be long in following. New York will not consent to see her commerce pass to Baltimore and Charleston. New England, which has been the firebrand of the continent, may smoulder and go to ashes among her own rocks. We will have none of her. Her young men will emigrate, marry and conform to the customs of the South. In fifty years she will be as little heard of as Nova Scotia or Newfoundland.'

"'The third class is the only one that has a clear and distinct plan and principle. All the others are drifting and catching at accidents, and hoping for lucky events. But we have a definite end in view. We mean to establish a Southern Confederacy, confined if possible to latitudes in which Slavery can profitably exist. We shall resist the entrance of Free States. We don't want them. Free and Slave States cannot live together. What is the use of a divorce, if one turns right about and marries the shrew over again? No. We are for immediate separation; for the establishment of a nation whose climate, industries, institutions, and people are homogeneous. We want no war. If let alone we will be peaceful. When it is settled that the South is permanently and forever a separate and independent nation, there may spring up kind relations between it and the North.'

"I inquired:

"'How can you speak with such confidence of success when you admit that you are a small minority, and that the two other classes constitute the wealth and the influential men of the South?'

"'Because, in a revolution, the men who stand still are powerless. Those men who purpose energetic action suit the temper of such times. In peace, conservatives—and, in revolution, radicals—will always lead. Hardly one man in Montgomery wanted secession. South Carolina forced them to it. This glorious State is guided by a few men who know what they are aiming at, and who use therefore every opportunity with advantage. All the rest are mere waiters upon time.'

"'Do you mean that President Davis did not wish Secession?'

"'He belonged to the second class of whom I spoke. He was opposed to secession. He could have been bribed easily to maintain the Union.'

"'Bribed?'

"'Yes, with the offer of the Presidency of it. An ambitious, obstinate man, subtle rather than strong. A wise manager of common affairs, but not large enough for comprehensive and complex matters. He will do very well, however, to pilot us out of the Union. He is proud and persistent, and will not easily be bamboozled.'

"'How do you regard Stephens?'

"'A sagacious man, without any belly.'

"'What do you mean by that?'

"'He is all brains. But he lacks force for action. He is a good lecturer, but a poor leader. He has gone off with us just as a priest might be imagined to have gone off with the ten tribes, hoping all the time to get back to Jerusalem. He goes with us in hopes, by and by, to have influence to get us back into the Union. That is like a cock-sparrow flying with a storm, hoping to manage it.'

"'Stephens certainly ranks high among the people.'

"'He ought to. He is honest, and a sagacious critic of historical events. He is wise about things that have already happened. But he has no constructive wisdom. He has neither the imagination, the courage, nor the—well—the fanaticism necessary for founding new States.'

"By this time we had reached St. Philip's church, and my companion entered a modest burial-ground lying across the way from it. I hesitated at entering. 'Only a few steps,' said he. We came to a grave, upon which stood, in altar-form, a large white slab of marble. By the faint light of the moon, I saw cut upon the middle of it—nothing above and nothing beneath it,—alone, simple and large,—the name

CALHOUN.

"For a moment or two there was silence. At length my companion spoke:

"'Had HE lived, we should have had a leader. He was our Prophet. He brought us to the verge of the Promised Land, but was not himself suffered to go over. He died, and no one is found worthy to bear his mantle! Being dead, he yet speaketh. From this spot goes forth the influence which will found a new nation. Men will come hither, in later days, upon pilgrimages, as they have hitherto to Mount Vernon!'

"'I have always deemed his ingenuity acute, but impracticable.

"'Impracticable? Is the Bible an impracticable book because people are not wise enough to practise its truths? All men of seed-thoughts are esteemed impracticable in their own generation. Men want something which they can use *now*—not something which will feed them by and by. They plant summer crops, not orchards. The popular thinkers are millers and bakers, who grind wheat and bake bread for immediate use.'

"'Do you regard the present movement in the South as the result of Calhoun's teaching?'

"'There is not a man under fifty in South Carolina who has not been fashioned by Calhoun's influence. Every Southern college has taught his writings. His views of the sovereignty of the separate States in the Union are the lever by which we shall pry the Union apart. A great man! and wiser thar his times!'

"'It has always seemed to me that he was the apostle of the Retrograde, not of the Advance, and your plans seem to me to be based on the philosophy of disintegration. You may hold together for a time by external pressure; but there is no cohesion in Calhoun's State; it is all centrifugal and explosive in its analyses and ultimate tendencies.'

"The clock in the church opposite struck twelve. I plead my health as a reason for returning. On the way back, the Governor told me that, on the morrow, Sumter would be formally summoned to surrender; that if any thing further were done toward mediation, he would notify me."

"*April* 11.—At two o'clock this afternoon, Gen. Beauregard formally demanded the evacuation of Fort Sumter. 'All proper facilities will be afforded,' so the summons ran, 'for the removal of yourself and command, together with company arms and property, and all private property, to any port in the United States which you may elect. The flag which you have upheld so long and with so much fortitude, under the most trying circumstances, may be saluted by you on taking it down.' Major Anderson replied: 'My sense of honor and my obligations to my Government prevent my compliance.' He stated incidentally that starvation would soon compel evacuation. I caught at this sentence. It seemed a ray of light and hope. I urged the General to communicate it to his Government. In due time came from Secretary Walker, at Montgomery, the permission, 'We do not desire needlessly to bombard Fort Sumter. If Major Anderson will state the time at which, as indicated by him, he will evacuate, and agree that in the meantime he will not use his guns against us, unless ours should be used against Fort Sumter, *you are thus to avoid the effusion of blood.* If this or its equivalent be refused, reduce the fort as your judgment decides to be most practicable.'

"I was overjoyed at the response. At the Governor's request I was joined to the gentlemen of Beauregard's staff who were that night to visit the fort. One thing I could not understand. Beauregard expected to open fire before morning! Why should that be? Was there some trick in this message?

"So confident was I that peace would be preserved, that I inwardly triumphed over the crowds in the streets of Charleston, who, aware of the imminent bombardment, filled the public ways, as on a holiday, gaily dressed, exuberant in spirits, as if the city were one vast wedding-feast. They were crowding the East and South Battery streets, and the Whitepoint garden, hoping to be spectators of a nation's funeral! The sun was gone down. The reflected light quivered on the waters, as if they were stained with blood. I know not why my confident joy was tempered with forebodings. I inwardly said, as I left the chattering crowd, 'Reap all the darkness which the night brings; you shall see no flames to-night!' Yet my heart was heavy. I was experiencing probably the reaction of long excitement. It was past midnight before we set off in the boat, and it was after one o'clock when we reached the fort.

"On approaching the postern we were challenged, but after a few minutes' delay, permitted to land and enter the fort. The gentlemen of our party were Major Lace, Col. Chism, Roger A. Pryor, Senator Chesnut, and myself.

The written message was delivered to Major Anderson:

"'If you will state the time at which you will evacuate Fort Sumter, and agree that in the meantime you will not use your guns against us, unless ours shall be employed against Fort Sumter, we will abstain from opening fire upon you.'

"Major Anderson was surrounded by his officers—all of them young men. He seemed about fifty—his hair touched with gray; his stature about five feet eight; his forehead square; his face intelligent, mild, but full of firmness.

"The interior of the fort, about an acre large, was in much confusion. Unmounted cannon lay upon the ground; material for various purposes was heaped up. It was now the morning of the 12th—Friday. Major Anderson said that on Monday, the 15th, three days hence, he should be obliged to evacuate the fort. He accordingly committed to writing, and delivered to us the promise that, unless meanwhile he should receive controlling instructions from his government, he would, on Monday noon, at twelve o'clock, leave the fort.

"The gentlemen of my party retired to a corner for consultation. I was overjoyed at the happy termination of this dangerous matter. I congratulated Major Anderson and his officers, and we all hoped that the storm was past, and that better counsels would bring brighter days to the country.

"After about fifteen minutes, the gentlemen who had been consulting returned, and handed to Major Anderson a paper containing the following message:

"'By authority of Brig.-Gen. Beauregard, commanding the Provisional Forces of the Confederate States, we have the honor to notify you that he will open the fire of his batteries on Fort Sumter one hour from this time.'

"I was petrified. I scarcely believed my senses. My first impulse was that of utter indignation at the men who, it was now plain, never meant or desired to avert a conflict. Doubtless they had hoped that the time for evacuation would be put so far off that there would be a decent pretext for refusing to wait.

"They were caught in their own trap. Only three days were demanded. Every one knew that at the best the fort could not be reduced in less than that time, and possibly not for a week. But blood was wanted. It was necessary to arouse the South.

"I could not repress the exclamation, 'This is shameful! I protest against it!' I was on the point of asking leave to remain in the fort, and to take part with its garrison in defending its flag! But what could I do, untrained, and ignorant of war, except to consume provisions already wasted to the minimum? With a heavy heart, bitter and resentful, I turned away and left the postern. My indignation kept me silent. We soon landed. It was already near morning. The east was changing, and a faint twilight came stealing over the harbor, every moment growing brighter. You have noticed that at no moment of the day has light such a virgin effect as between twilight and sunrise. Everything has a freshness, an unworn and pure look, as if it had just been created. I stood alone, for I would not go with the gentlemen of his staff to report to Beauregard. A light film of mist lay along the rim of the harbor; but within that silver setting the water lay dark and palpitating. Out of its bosom rose Sumter—sheer up from the water, which lapped its very base on every side. How serene and secure the fort looked! How beautifully the morning brightened around it, though as yet the sun was far down below the sea!

"I was startled by the roar of a mortar a little behind me. Out of its white smoke rose, with graceful curve, a bomb that hurtled through the air and burst right above the fort! 'Cursed be the hand that fired that shot! May violence overtake the wretch, and a disgraceful death!' I did not know that it was my own State that broke the peace! Edmund Ruffin it was, an old man with white hair that hung down in profusion over his shoulders, and was now flying wild, his eyes bright with an excitement either of fanaticism or insanity.

"This single shot given, there was a dead pause for a moment or two. A flock of wild ducks, startled from their feeding ground, flew sklitting along the face of the water, and were lost behind the fort. The peace was gone! This tranquil harbor was changed to a volcano! Jetting forth from around its sides came tongues of fire, wrapped in smoke, and the air was streaked with missiles converging from every side and meeting at Sumter! Now that the circle was once on fire it flamed incessantly. Gun followed gun—battery answered battery—and the earth fairly trembled with the explosions. I was fascinated. I could not withdraw. I waited to see the fort deliver its fire. It stood silent. Did the giant sleep?

"As the sun flamed above the horizon and shot its light across the waters, up rose the flag from the fort, gracefully climbing to its topmost height, and rolled out its folds, as if it were sent up to look out over the troubled scene and command peace! Still no gun from the fort replied Two hours of bombarding, and not a shot in return! But at seven in the morning, a roar from the lower tier of guns gave notice that the fort had roused itself and joined in the affray. Its shot began to fall around me. I retreated within the battery, and then, sick and heart-heavy, I determined to make my way back to the city. My heart was with the seventy men battling for the flag against five thousand.

"The Confederate flag and the palmetto were flying together over the forts. My soul spurned them! I felt that I was among enemies. The roar went on. As I drew near the city, I began to hear the church bells ringing wild with joy! Crowds everywhere lined the wharves, filled the streets, covered the roofs of the hitherward houses. The people had been out all night! Many, discouraged at the delay, had begun returning to their homes. But the first sound of a gun brought them back with alacrity. One would think that the humbling of the national flag was the most joyous occasion in the world! Worn out with excitement and want of sleep, disgusted and indignant, I spurned all company, and would hide myself from the sight of the people and the sounds of the heavy guns, which in succession, or in salvos, filled the air with their dull, distant thunder. I sought my room, and toward noon fell into a feverish sleep. The noise of the artillery still sounded in my dreams, and, mixed in the phantasms of sleep, helped to disorder my imagination. I dreamed that I was at Norwood, and conversing with Miss Rose, when Doctor Wentworth entered, and his voice broke like a sound of thunder upon me, and the dream, changing, led me now with Cathcart, and now with Wentworth, among sand-batteries and forts. These dissolving views changed, and it was Miss Rose, or Alice that was in distress—the house seemed crumbling and falling, part by part, with terrible crash, and I—utterly unable to stir! I started up from such disturbed visions. All the afternoon the same continuous firing filled every part of the city with its sound. Volumes of black smoke rolled up from the fort. It was on fire! Its guns fired but infrequently. Every time the smoke rolled away I looked anxiously through the glass to see if the flag still waved. The sun went down upon it! All night, but at intervals of fifteen minutes, the bombardment went on. People who had expected to reduce the fort in a few hours seemed discouraged at this protracted defence.

"The morning came, and with its first full light the forts that lay in a circle round the fort, opened in order, Johnson on the south, Cummings' Point on the east, Moultrie on the north, and the floating battery on the west, together with the smaller intermediate batteries. As far as I could discern, the walls of Sumter had suffered little. No breach appeared. The barbette guns were knocked away. But though they were the heaviest, they had never been used. The besiegers aimed to sweep them with such a fire that the men could not work them. Again the smoke rolled up from the fort, and flames could now be seen. Moultrie poured a continuous stream of red-hot shot upon the devoted fort. At last came noon. The firing ceased. Boats were putting off to the fort. By one o'clock it was noised abroad that the garrison had surrendered! It was true. On Sunday noon, they were to salute the flag and evacuate the fort.

"If the week days were jubilant, how shall I describe the Sabbath? The churches were thronged with excited citizens. In many of these all restraint was thrown off, and the thanksgiving and rejoicing for the victory swept every thing like summer winds. I went to my own church, the Episcopal. The decorum of the service, which is a bulwark against irreverent excitements, served, on this occasion, a good purpose. Yet, strange as it may seem, in the lessons for the day occurred a passage that sounded in my ears like a prophecy, and full of warning and doom. It was this: 'Prepare war, wake up the mighty men; let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.'

"As I came from church, a south wind blew, and I heard the sound of cannon. I walked rapidly to the point, and only in time to see through my glass the flag descending from over Sumter! The drama is ended—or rather opened! Who can tell what shall be the end of this? It may be that all the roar and battle of the two days past is as nothing to that which at some future day shall precede the raising again of this flag over this fallen fortress. The future is in the hand of God!

"To-morrow I shall bid farewell to these unhappy scenes. I go to Richmond, and thence home. Shall I ever see Norwood again? I know not why my spirits sink so low. I am full of forebodings. Probably weakness and fatigue are reasons enough. But over the future hangs a dark cloud which I would that I might pierce and know what it hides! Should I never see old friends again, I would not willingly be forgotten of them—for I can never forget. And so, farewell. TOM HEYWOOD."

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE AROUSING.

The March winds had blown themselves out. Rainy April had set in. Over all New England, the signs of the new season were thickening. Maple-sap was flowing freely, and the woods and maple orchards were filled with sounds of industry.

The dull gray of the uppermost twigs in chestnut woods was turning to a ruddy brown. The peach-blossom buds were swelling fast. The willows already shook their tassels in the wind. The air, the earth, the round heaven and every creature beneath it seemed to rejoice in the breaking of winter. Cattle rubbed themselves against fences to free the old coat and give place to the new. The herds owned the fervid impulses of love. The dairy woman cries, "See how yellow the butter is to-day!" "Yes," says the herdsman, "the cows have been down in the moist pasture, and found early grass.

The oxen are yoked and the plough is set agoing. Blackbirds follow the furrow and pick for fat grubs. The red-winged starling from the swamp sounds its medley—a cross between a cackle and a whistle. No more ice! no more snow! Cold winds yet contend for the mastery, and new-dropped lambs shiver, and frisking calves cuddle in sheltered spots from its rough breath.

But, ah! the time is propitious! The sun is ascending from the south, and bringing with him all treasures. Look! do you not see those low-lying clouds in the south glorious and ruddy? They are harvests which the sun is driving forward—red apples, purple grapes, yellow corn, and wheat. Full of gifts is thy bosom, O South! Listen to the sounds which every wind wafts from the trees; it is the bluebird in the orchard, just come from its southern home. Robins have come thence. The south sends sweet songs of birds, and smell of flowers, and the silver haze of showers, every drop of which is like a planted seed. O gorgeous South! whose days are summer round the whole year, to thee fly our birds in autumn; and thence again, tuned and refledged, they come to us in spring! From thee come new life and joy Peace be on thee, mother of all good! and far from thy fields be harm and sorrow—thou that art full of blessings!

On the morning of April 12th, there came from the south other gifts. Not sunlight, or the flight of birds, or the flowers of spring; but a lurid cloud, sounding and dreadful, proclaiming to the nation that war had come!

When the telegraph shot the news of the bombardment of Fort Sumter through every State, men held their breath. They could scarcely understand. Like those suddenly overtaken by an immeasurable grief, they stood silent, listening, waiting for something to say,—"It is a dream! it is not true!" As the day wore on, a sharp curiosity tensely held every mind. How fares the conflict? Will the fort sustain itself and silence the beleaguering guns? For an impression had crept through the public mind that the fort was invincible. We were all children then, and knew nothing of that school in which since the nation has had millions of scholars!

On Saturday, came contradictory tidings. Rumor was busy. The reality of war was eating slowly into men's consciousness. None had believed it. Such unnatural violence can be possible only to the insane! Was ever nation happier? Was ever prosperity so continuous, and its fruits in material wealth so wonderful?

If war begins, the South is too shrewd to begin it. She has ruled the land for fifty years, and if as wise as the English aristocracy, she will bend for the moment to the political gale which may not be resisted, but making peace with circumstances, she will seize again the helm and guide the ship!

No one believed war possible. So long had peace brooded that it seemed a destiny. We were used to fiery conflicts of politics, and threats, and predictions of disaster and ruin. In the eyes of a vanquished party the country is always ruined. Intense excitements were characteristic of our national life. But free speech had always proved a safety-valve to men's passions. Men waxed hot, raged and denounced; then, as after a thunder storm every one went on his way in a clearer sky and purer air!

Though it had year by year been threatened; though the threats grew sterner as the election of Mr. Lincoln approached;

though the act of secession was accomplished, and seven States threw off their allegiance to the Government; though South Carolina day and night was girding Fort Sumter with batteries, and gangs of slaves, by the thousand, were heaping up the sands of the shore into vast fortifications, and the lighthouses had been darkened, the buoys of Southern harbors removed, judges had resigned, forts had been seized, and sworn public officer after officer had proved treacherous, yet the innate hopefulness of the people and the security bred by long peace, prevailed. Men would not believe that there could be war!

On Sunday morning, the 14th of April, it was known that Sumter had surrendered. The scales fell from men's eyes!

THERE WAS WAR!

The flag of the Nation had been pierced by men who had been taught their fatal skill under its protection! The nation's pride, its love, its honor suffered with that flag, and with it trailed in humiliation!

Without concert, or council, the whole people rose suddenly with one indignation to vindicate the Nation's honor. It came as night comes, or the morning—broad as a hemisphere. It rose as the tides raise the whole ocean, along the whole continent, drawn upward by the whole heavens!

The frivolous became solemn: the wild grew stern; the young felt an instant manhood.

It was the strangest Sunday that ever dawned on Norwood since the colonial days when, by reason of hostile Indians, the fathers repaired to church with their muskets! All the region round about came forth. Never had such an audience gathered in that house. Every face had in it a new life. Dr. Buell was not wont to introduce into his Sabbath services topics allied to politics, nor did he mean to change his habit to-day.

His sermon, weighty, and on themes which usually are accounted more solemn than all others, yet sounded light and empty in men's ears. Nor had he ever preached with so much difficulty. He lost the connection, hurried passages which should have been deliberate, and afterwards owned that he was never so glad to get through a sermon.

It was in the prayer following that the stream burst forth. A mighty tide rose within him, and he poured out his soul for the country. He prayed for the Government, for the men in Fort Sumter, who had been like the three children in the fiery furnace, for the flag, and for all in authority, that they might have wisdom and courage to vindicate it!

The house was still—so still that the ear ached between every pause. The word Amen set loose an army of handkerchiefs, and people wiped more eyes than were ever wet at once in that house. Just as Dr. Buell rose to give out the closing hymn, he saw the choir rising as if to give an anthem. The minister sat down; but he quickly rose up again, and every man in the house, as the choir sang the *Star Spangled Banner*. Such a scene had never been known in sober Norwood! And when the last strain died, it was with difficulty that the minister could repress an open cheer.

"Why didn't you let 'em?" said Deacon Marble. "It's enough to make the stones cry out. I never felt so sorry before that I hadn't a house full of boys."

Aunt Polly for once found nothing to rebuke in the Deacon. "This is the Lord's work. Sunday isn't a bit too good to teach men that they ought'er save the country! My grandfather dug the sile out from under this church to git saltpetre, to make powder on, to fight for our liberties! And I guess the old man's bones that's lyin' yonder shook when they heard them cannon jar! Now's the time for folks to show themselves."

The whole population seemed to be in the street! Men formed groups and discussed the one only topic. Party lines were fast rubbing out. There was an afternoon service, but it was like a dream. As yet men's feelings had found no channels, and no relief in action. A few discordant notes there were. Tough old Hunt, farmer up in "Hardscrabble," as a poor neighborhood was called, in spite of angry eyes and frowning brows would have his say:—"I allus told you that the Abolitionists would bring blood on us. Now I hope they're satisfied. They'v been teasin' and worryin' the South for twenty years, and now the South has turned and gored 'em. Sarved 'em right!"

"I tell ye, old leather-skin," said Hiram Beers, "you'd better shut up! The boys ain't in a temper to hear such talk. You'll git hurt afore you git through a hundred speeches like that!"

Old Hunt was a small wiry man, about sixty years of age, with black hair, and a turbid hazel eye, that looked cruel when he was wrathful. Hiram's words set him aflame.

"Where's the man that's goin' to stop my tongue? This is a free country, I guess! I *shall* say what I've a mind to——"

Just then, Hiram, who saw that trouble was brewing, changed the attack from the old man to his horse, who was as fiery and obstinate as his master, and already had exhausted his patience and fodder, in a long Sunday under the horse-shed. While the old man was standing in his wagon, bristling all over, like a black and tan terrier, and fierce for opposition, Hiram gave his horse a keen cut under his belly, where a horse least likes to be hit. The first thing Hunt knew he was sprawling in his wagon, and the horse was heading for home with a speed unbecoming a Sabbath-day. The old man, nimble and plucky, gathered himself up, utterly at a loss which he was most angry with, the public or the horse,—now giving the animal a rousing pull, and then shaking his left fist back at the crowd, he disappeared from the Green, in a medley of utterances, which, addressed sometimes to his horse and sometimes to Hiram, and sometimes to the imaginary Abolitionists, formed a grotesque oration.

"Oh, you won't stop, will ye?—(a jerk)—You d—d Abolitionists—(turning back his head)—Come down, ye beast!—(to his horse)—free country! every body do as he chooses! Can't stop me, tell ye—why don't you stop—hold up! No! I won't hold my jaw, for none of ye! I'll break your jaw if you don't stop, ye de—— beast—Abolitionists—tell ye—!" and with that he was gone.

"I'm as much of a democrat as he is," said Hiram, "and I've allus gone with my party. But, I tell ye boys, this is no party matter. This is a black business, and there ain't but one way to settle it. We've tried the votes, and they won't stand that. Now we'll try the bullets, and the side that can stand that longest is goin' to rule this country, that's all."

Old Mr. Turfmould ventured to say, without meaning any harm—merely as a moral reflection—"Ah, Mr. Beers, it's awful killin' folks, and huddlin' 'em into holes without funerals and decent fixins of any kind."

"Shet up, you blasted old owl!" said Hiram. "This thing's goin' to be fought out, that's sartain, and we won't have nobody hangin' back at home. A man that won't fight when his flag's fired on, ain't worth a dead nit."

Old Deacon Trowbridge was talking with Judge Bacon, to whom he usually deferred with profound respect for his legal learning.

"I hope," said Judge Bacon, with calm and gentle tones, "that the Government will forbear and not be in haste to strike again. We ought not to think of coercion. Our Southern brethren will come to their reason, if we are patient, and wait for their passions to subside."

"I tell ye, Judge, we ain't goin' to wait. We've waited long enough, and this is what we've got for it! Secede! rob the Government! shoot our flag! and kill our soldiers, shut up in the fort, like chickens in a coop, and then not fight? You might as well have a Day of Judgment, and nobody hurt. If we aint goin to fight now, we'd better swap clothes with the women and let *them* try awhile. I tell ye we *will* fight!"

Deacon Trowbridge was like a green hickory fire on a winter's morning. It requires the utmost skill and blowing to get it to burn, but when once it is started, it blazes and crackles with immense heat, and speedily drives all those who were cuddling and shivering about it, far back into the room.

On he went, indignant at the Judge, and talking to every one he met. "It's come! Ye can't help it. I don't *want* to help it! It's the Lord's will and I'm desperate willin'. If my boys—some on 'em—don't go, I'll disown 'em. Don't want no cowards on my farm!"

Home with Dr. Wentworth walked Dr. Buell. He had lately grown even more intimate than during the years before. He was a lone man, subject to those depressions which follow severe study. Such moods in him were relieved by the gentle stimulus of family life. He was so simple and sincere in manners that every one in the house felt it a pleasure to serve him. He thus gathered the fruits of a wise household without either the care or responsibility of maintaining its organization.

Agate Bissell, who was housekeeper, teacher, nurse, and companion, doing the work of five ordinary persons, with yet much time and energy to spare, met the doctor and minister at the door. She looked eagerly, but silently, upon them, with hungry eyes, as if she besought some word of sympathy. The conversation went on. Instead of giving it in broken fragments, we condense the remarks of Dr. Wentworth, as if it were one speech.

"It must come! the argument is ended! My judgment has long told me that a conflict of arms must grow out of such radical conflict of principles. But my feelings of hopefulness constantly set aside my political logic, and like others, I did not expect bloodshed. For thirty years, it is now apparent that the two great halves of this nation were deepening into radically antagonistic convictions—not about politics, in its common sense, but upon the whole question of humanity which underlies and finally controls states, churches, philosophy, and religion itself. The only hope was in localizing these influences and keeping them apart. That could have been done had there not been a central government, which both parts strove to appropriate and control. We now see that the Federal Government had little power to control and much to divide the nation. That will always be the weak place in our nation. The prodigious power which is generated in wide-lying States, absolutely independent and sovereign, except in a few arbitrary and artificial arrangements, cannot be controlled by the Federal Government, except by such an increase of its power as would prove fatal to local liberty.

"Whenever a considerable number of contiguous States shall be united by common interests and passions, in resisting the party that controls the Federal Government, we shall be in danger of rebellion.

"It is slavery to-day. The next time it may be a commercial influence. But whatever it is, it must be some unifying influence which, like slavery, has educated the community to diverse, strange, and unnational customs, morals, political principles, and civic feelings, that can secretly organize such a body of States together as to frame a formidable rebellion. Because men now are seeking to pluck the unripe fruit of separation and new nationality, it does not follow that in coming times the ripe fruit may not drop of itself, without opposition, and be gathered up cheerfully and willingly. States will hardly be allowed to draw off because they *differ*. That will make them enemies. But if they are agreed, and divide in some future day simply because the vast bulk of such an Empire of States is too great to be conveniently grouped in one Federal Government, there might be less resistance. *Now* the tendency is setting toward unity. That may expend itself. The next tide may be to variety. But who can tell? National life allows no prophet to unveil it.

"Probably if you and I were in the South, we should join with it. This conflict is but opening. It looks now as if all the Southern States must be swept into the movement. The State feeling is stronger than the National. A crushing defeat might destroy the movement; but a Southern victory will sweep the whole South like a flame. In that case all the best men will join it. We should not expect too much from human nature. Our friend Heywood is honorable, and will resist disunion; but when he sees it accomplished, he will go with his State, and probably join the Southern army."

Alice Cathcart was one of those whose stillness, both in speech and motion, was so great that her very presence seemed swallowed up in the personality of others. She sat by the doctor's wife, as if she were only the shadow which Mrs. Wentworth cast. The conversation had reached the doctor's remark about the young Virginian, when suddenly, and with passionate vehemence, she exclaimed:

"Never! He will never betray his country! It is a shame to slander one who cannot answer for himself!"

Had a piece of artillery gone off in the room it would hardly have startled the company more than such a speech from the gentle, silent Alice! The doctor smiled and would have replied, but Alice disappeared. Mrs. Wentworth found her in a flood of tears, and folded the dear child to her bosom, without words, comforting her by the sympathy of a loving embrace.

The sun had gone down. Every household in Norwood and wide about was a scene of excitement. That night prayer was a reality! Never before had the children heard from their fathers' lips such supplications for the country. Never before had the children's hearts been open to join so fervently in prayer themselves. Men seemed to be conscious that they were helpless in the presence of an immeasurable danger! By Faith they laid their hearts upon the bosom of God, till they felt the beatings of that great Heart whose courses give life and law to the Universe!

CHAPTER XLIV.

ECHOES FROM THE NORTH.

"WHEREAS, The laws of the United States have been for some time past, and now are, opposed, and the execution thereof obstructed in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the Marshals by law; now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution and the laws, have thought fit to call forth, and do hereby call forth, the militia of the several States of the Union, to the aggregate number of 75,000, in order to suppress said combinations, and to cause the laws to be duly executed."

This was the answer of the people, speaking by their Government, to the acts of secession, and to the assault upon the nation's flag and fortress at Fort Sumter. Dry words they seem, formal and stately. But there was fire in them to kindle a flame such that all the world paused, as if a continent were on fire!

Our noblest sentiments, when assailed, never deliberate. A wise man foreseasons his honor, love, purity, patriotism, with reason. When touched with harm they burst forth into action as instantaneously as powder touched with fire into flame! When the flag was abased, the nation shuddered. No one had suspected how deep in the heart of the people was the sentiment of patriotism. For two generations men had been buying and selling, making and distributing, until the dust and shavings of the manufactory seemed to have covered down all heroic sentiments. Long peace and exceeding prosperity had shaped popular politics into a greedy game of policy, and great principles, no longer debated or tolerated, sat in the capitol, like decrepit old men crooning of the golden days of old.

The lowering of the nation's flag before the guns of South

Carolina pierced the pride and honor of the North to the quick The outburst was universal and unpremeditated. The morning and evening of a single day saw peace utterly laid aside, and twenty millions of people filled with the spirit of war. Men would not tolerate argument, and trampled upon mercenary considerations. Before, men had seemed swallowed up in material interests, and dead to heroic sentiments. The trumpet sounded the resurrection, and in an instant they came forth into a life of heroic sentiment, and, placing honor, duty and patriotism high above all sordid interests, they offered up to their country their ease, their wealth, and life itself! Passions there were, but they were auxillaries of the moral sentiments, lending to them force and fire. For a people's war—a free, intelligent, religious people—is not bred either of a greedy avarice, nor of royal pride and ambition. It was a war for the Commonwealth, nay, more refined yet, a war, unparalleled in magnitude and cost, waged for the *Principles* on which alone commonwealths can stand! It was kindled not by the young, but by the old and sage as well. It was fed not by the ignorant and violent, but by women, scholars, Christians. The recruiting ground was not in low and dark corners, among the ignorant and roving. nor chiefly among laboring men, but preeminently in academies and colleges, in Sabbath schools and churches. No one held himself aloof. There was a generous competition who should go, and men strove for a place in military companies as at other times for honor and wealth. The whole community were moved to the core by the power of the unseen. It was an enthusiasm for an abstract sentiment, for an invisible quality of patriotism—for law, for liberty, for government. This was a sublime spectacle, of the spirit of government rising up in the very sources of all government!

The same scenes were at the same time occurring in the Southern States. Even more fiery was the outbreak, because the people were of more demonstrative natures. Pity it is that admiration for the uprising of millions of men to found a new State should be stripped of its sublimity by the debasing conceptions of the new civilization which blinded its leaders! Yet our moral disapprobation of the secret and potential causes which were at work need not withhold from the common people the credit of the most earnest sincerity witnessed by offering up all that man holds dear for the cause which they had been misled to believe was the cause of liberty and of honor!

And thus it came to pass that thirty millions of men, divided into two bands, went seeking each other through the darkness and mystery of war. Neither party considered or cared to ponder what was before it. Like two warriors standing on the opposite banks of a swollen stream, they went down in the darkness of the night to find and grapple with each other in the turbulent and dangerous ford!

Toward both parties came travelling great sorrows and disasters. But looking full at the future, neither of them saw aught of that which it contained.

Already was descending, as in the apocalyptic vision, the mountain of fire which was cast into the sea of blood, and no man heard its rush, or knew its dread disasters, until all over the land fire and blood were cast up like a storm spray driven in from the ocean!

Are men less sensitive than metal? Shall barometers foretell whirlwinds, give alarm of tornadoes half a continent distant, and yet shall a whole hemisphere of storms move in upon society, and no man feel the chill of the shadow which they cast forward? Right before the nation were clouds dripping blood, and full of wasting fire. None saw. Right before them were heaped-up corpses, armies of the dead, suffering, fear, famine and pestilence, but men heeded them not!

Neither, any more, did they see the new heavens and the new earth that followed the convulsions of the old, a nobler liberty, a purer justice, a better friendship, a more lasting brotherhood!

Fort Sumter was evacuated April 14; the President's proclamation came Monday, the 15th; and before sundown of that night, Barton Cathcart's company were on the green, ready to leave on the cars that night. This promptitude was the more remarkable because at least one half of its numbers lived out of the village, and several of them some miles distant. Arthur Wentworth, now twenty years old, fortunately was at home from college, and promptly joined his company.

There is no one scene which so stirs a country town as the departure from it of the first companies for war. Mothers, sisters, and lovers look upon the men with yearning admiration; and the imagination heightens the sense of mysterious danger into which they are going. But on this day parents were scarcely less eager to send, than were their sons to go. The city of Washington—the capital was threatened!

'Biah Cathcart came to town, with his wife Rachel. He was calm and stern. She was singularly exalted. Her soul said:

"What am I that the Lord should permit me to send my son to the defence of his Government? Great are his mercies, O my soul."

Miss Wentworth was absent from home. She had gone from Boston down to Maine. before the tidings of war broke over the country. Immediately she started for home. But, so promptly had Barton moved that he had been in Boston several days before Rose reached Norwood Yet, in the whirl of preparation, he had found time to write a few lines to her:

"*April* 15, 1861.

"To-day I leave for the field upon a sudden summons. My whole soul consents. I was never more cheerful. But a single shadow lies upon me. At last, let me speak plainly, Rose. I am sad at leaving you, whom I love more than father and mother, or all beside. This will surprise you, but it is no sudden experience. It has been the secret of my life. From my boyhood I have cherished it; whether with more of pain than of cheer I cannot tell. The hunger of the heart in a proud nature, sensitive and silent, is hard to bear. And yet I would not have been without this love. It has made so much of my life that if it were taken out scarce any thing would remain worth keeping. It has inspired and cheered, it has chidden and restrained. In the fire of this love, whose flame I might not show, every feeling of my life has been tempered.

"Only within the year have I been in circumstances to justify me in an honorable solicitation. But a shadow fell upon me. Another came before me. Pardon me. I would not speak of it, but I may never return, and for our childhood friendship's sake you will indulge me in the sad pleasure at last of speaking out my heart.

"If only I knew that your interest was with another, all struggle would cease. Your happiness would shed some faint joy on my disappointment. I know not whether, even if you were free, you could love me. Have I said too much? It is as nothing to the unsaid. The silence of my heart through years now yearns for an expression. Only let me hear one word from you; if not in Boston, then at Washington. I pray you do not send me to the war without a word to say that you are not offended—to say more would be a joy too great to hope! But let me not go in the chill of utter silence. BARTON."

This letter he hastily did up, and being obliged to employ other hands, for a hundred errands, he entrusted this to faithful Pete, with instructions to convey it promptly to Dr. Wentworth's, and place it in the hands of Dr. Wentworth or of his wife.

Pete had been on hand all day, executing Barton's orders with remarkable alacrity. It is doubtful whether he knew what all the excitement was about. He had gone post-haste to Riddell's to serve a notice on a member of the company. He had ridden two miles in another direction, as only Pete could ride on a like errand. He had been out to Bidwell's, and to Carrington's, and to Eaton's, and crossing through the woods, and past the red school-house, he had come down by Marsh's, and Morris', warning one man at each place.

"What is it, Pete?" said grandma Carrington.

"You're wanted," said he with a half guzzling laugh. "Captain Cathcart wants Tom right off, with all his regimentals. They're going to-night."

"Tom is out ploughin'. Here, Roxy! Roxy! Where's that child? When you don't want her, she's right under your feet, and when you do want her you couldn't catch her with a fine tooth comb. I'll go myself. My father was out in Seventy-six, and my boys have got his blood, I guess."

The old woman was past seventy—white-haired, wrinkled, sharp and nimble. Away she went over fence and field, saying to Pete:

"You go 'long; the boy 'll be there afore you are"

At Eaton's they were all at home, and in the enthusiasm of the moment Pete was offered a little rum. Now Pete had never joined any temperance society, and could not therefore break a pledge. Looking for a second at the glass, as one recognizes a long-absent friend, his lips parted, and the rum disappeared as a drop of water sinks into parched ground.

Thence Pete betook himself, now inwardly comforted, around the Owl Swamp, over on to the turnpike to Belden's, but Belden's son Will had gone into town, partly on an errand, and partly for news, so that he would get his warning in Norwood. The old man was one of the hard cases in New England—foul-mouthed, ugly, and regularly soaked with liquor. Yet his head was so solid that he seldom lost his keen judgment in a bargain, or his management of property. His wife was an earnest Christian woman, with the face of a sufferer. Her home was a purgatory. But five children were reared there in virtue and honor, every one abhorring strong drink. The eldest was sergeant in Barton's company. Old Belden liked nothing better than to "season a man," as he called it.

Poor Pete had lingering about him a bewitching memory of his last glass, and the sight of the decanter put him into a radiant mood. A large glass was poured off, the old man applauding and swearing horribly. But Pete's instinct of obedience was proof against further persuasion. He knew that Barton had ordered him to report to him again in the quickest possible time, and so, in spite of the sparkling of the liquor which old Belden held up before his face, and shook it till it foamed, he departed. It was full time.

On his way back he thought of ever so many funny things, and saw ever so many queer sights. At any rate, at every other step he sizzled out a laugh.

At any other time Barton would have perceived Pete's condition; but now amid the excitement which pervaded the town, he scarcely noticed his exhilaration.

He gave him the letter to Miss Rose, with particular direction not to lose it, and to hand it that night to Dr. Wentworth. One or two other papers, also, Pete was charged to deliver, all of which were duly placed in Pete's hat; where, also, were stowed his red cotton handkerchief, two or three snarls of different sized strings, a paper of fish hooks, and a bit of newspaper over all. Every moment was precious if Pete was to fulfil his errands.

His senses were fast retiring into obscurity; yet he had retained the impulse to go to Dr. Wentworth's after he had lost all idea of the reason for going. The Doctor was called after tea into the kitchen to see Pete, who at once, giggling and shuffling, made a faint attempt to give him from his hat a paper

The doctor read:

"At the last moment, I have got me a few things, as you suggested, at Wadsworth's. Please settle the bill. BARTON."

"What's all this? This must be for Barton's father. I'll give it to him to-morrow. Mrs. Good, you had better let Pete lie down in the out-room."

What became of Barton's letter to Rose was never certainly known. Pete was up before daylight the next morning, trying to get some water; and then he kindled the kitchen fire, using the scraps of paper in his hat to set it off with. But, certain it is that Rose never received it, and wondered and grieved that Barton should again have left town abruptly without a word of farewell.

For, the second day after his departure, Rose came home. Her brother was gone, and she had passed within a few squares of him in Boston, not dreaming that he was in the city.

"Mother, did Barton call to say good-bye?"

"He was too busy. We all went out to see him off, and shook hands with him at the cars. I never saw him so radiant He stood evidently the first man among men in that hour. And his military dress was wonderfully becoming. Really I quite fell in love with him."

Rose was silent for a time, and then, with enforced naturalness, asked:

"Did you say that Barton left any word for me?"

"Nothing that I heard of. There was only half a day to summon his company, and get them away. Our Arthur was in great spirits. He looked like a rose among those tan-faced country-boys. You know that his complexion is beautiful, and his chestnut hair curled out from under his military cap most becomingly!"

Rose sat silent, buried in thought. Early she plead the fatigue of journeying and retired. It was but masked somnolency. Sleep sometimes courts you till you yield, and then coquettishly flies. So it was with Rose.

There are many kinds of wakefulness. If trouble be real, if danger be apparent, wakefulness may have a useful end. One may while away the whole night in processes of investigation. All distractions are gone. Neither light nor noise lay any tax upon the senses. They rest. All the vital force is concentrated in the thinking part, and, in the darkness, especially following early sleep, and just preceding the morning, the mind easily penetrates things obscure, and disentangles things perplexed, and unrolls things most involved.

There may be a sleeplessness of pleasurable excitement. And sometimes this is an exquisite pleasure. One has something to learn of luxury who has never lain awake with joy. One then seems to float peacefully in an atmosphere of bliss. Pure, continuous delight flows from every nerve, and from every faculty.

But there is an excitement of half-born feelings, of evanescent fancies, where thoughts but begin, and vanish, where feelings start without developing into definite forms, where the whole mind is played over by the checkered light and shade of things illusory and imaginative; when, as it were out of the air, the spectres of coming emotions cast pale shadows upon the sensitive brain, which vanish when you would inspect them, and return the moment you cease to analyze them. How welcome is the cool morning after such a night of spirit watching! How good and pleasant is it to come again to things that may be touched, to the dew, to the things it lies upon, to the song of birds, and to the companionship of friends! Such as this last excitement filled Rose's night, and glad was she to see the morning.

CHAPTER XLV.

FIRST-FRUITS.

The most striking trait in camp life to Barton was the facility shown by his men in adapting themselves to entirely new circumstances. It was a complete revolution in their method of life. Many of his men were accustomed to all the refinements of wealth, and all of them had been reared in abundance. There were fifteen graduates of colleges, and five under-graduates. There were, besides, several students of medicine and law, and five men who were in commercial business. The others were intelligent mechanics, machinists, factory men, young men from the farm, and from that large and peculiar class, in New England, who may be called *bargain-makers*—men who, without a regular business, are energetic and enterprising in a thousand money-making ways, now dealing in cattle, or buying up in autumn whatever line of produce promises to advance in market; in short, the movable merchants, the cavalry of trade. With one accord they fell into the proprieties of their new life, and in a few days, like a well-made machine, every thing began to move smoothly. By the last of the week the regiment to which they belonged was despatched to Washington. Young Arthur Wentworth had been elected second lieutenant. He was one of the rare cases in which a robust virility exists in connection with an almost feminine beauty and delicacy of organization. His curling hair was of a rich chestnut color, his complexion almost of dazzling whiteness, with a cheek suffused with carmine, blue eyes, features that did not wait for after-life to give them expression, but which from youth were shapely and exquisite. So much beauty is indeed a misfortune in a man who has not a manly force to lift it clear above effeminacy. That force Arthur Wentworth had. None was quicker of foot in all robust games. He had practised athletic exercises and excelled all his fellows. He could run faster, jump farther, climb with more agility than the best. He was a leader on the base-ball ground—loud and merry in his outcry, intense and impetuous at t-ball. He lacked something of strength at wrestling, but made it up in deft agility. He was the pride of his class, and so pure and noble in his loving nature, that neither envy nor jealousy, as yet, had been shown by any. All the signs pointed him out as a poet. All the signs, too, pointed him out as an artist. But not less did he promise to become an orator. Fate made him a soldier. To Barton he was dear for doubled reasons—for his own sake and for another's. In the company and regiment he became a universal favorite from his modest fidelity and thoroughness in duty, and for the rare social gifts which he displayed in the social life of the camp.

To his sister Rose, some months later, he wrote:

"WASHINGTON, *July* 14, 1861.

"Ah, Rose, you should be a soldier! or, if that is forbidden, come as a fairy *vivandière*, or even as a fairy, and hover about us, and be to us as the light that flashes upon our cold steel—a flame of beauty around the instruments of death. Camp-life, the march, the drill, is a perpetual dream. I wake into a surprise of pleasure each morning. My enjoyment reminds me of Parson Buell's favorite expression in prayer, 'Thy mercies are new every morning and fresh every moment!' Our Captain Cathcart is a wonder! There was a Barton Cathcart, you will recollect! Do not imagine that your Barton Cathcart and our Captain Cathcart are the same No more to be compared are they than the seed is to the blossom! Our Cathcart is your Barton developed! He drills the regiment, and, as Harris has gone home, it is feared, to die, Cathcart is to be major. His commission is looked for daily. All the officers come to him on military questions. His reading, really, has been extraordinary. He is always letting out something that no one dreamed was in him. He works at his men all day, and at his books all night. I go to sleep, and he is studying. I wake, and he is still at his books and maps. I infer, therefore, that he never sleeps, and that is the opinion of the camp. Yet he is never fagged out, but affable, obliging, and the very life of good-fellowship. His care for me is beyond words. Though he is rigorous toward me more than toward any other officer, yet I feel that there is a tenderness in his strictness which is very touching. By the way, Barton's advancement will be luck for several of us. I go up a step, and am to be first-lieutenant. That's very well for a beginning. But I'll come home a general! Prepare the ceremonies for my return! I read Major Cathcart your last letter. It was so full of home-news that I knew it would please him. When I finished, he said, 'Is that all?' and his voice was so altered that I looked up and saw that he was unwell. He left for the air, and that night did not study at all, but was out most of the night.

"'I tell you, Major,' said I, 'by virtue of my authority as a doctor's son, that you shall not tax yourself as you do. You are making yourself sick.'

"'In a few days we shall move, and then we shall all have out-door exercise enough, and too much, or I am mistaken.'

"'What do you mean? You don't doubt that we shall whip the rebels off-hand. If you do, you are about the only man in camp that thinks so.'

"'It will be all luck if we do. Our men are green. The army is no army. They ought to be reduced, for two months more, by the most rigorous discipline. We may win—or lose. The chances are even. Enthusiasm is good to raise men upon, but discipline is the only thing to fight on.'

"'But it is the same with the rebels—they are as green as we are.'

"'Yes, that is true; and therefore I say that there is no calculation possible. Every thing is contingent. They may fight or run away—who knows? We may stand up well, or a panic may seize our raw troops.'

"'Why don't you say so to McDowell?'

"'There is no need. He already has exhausted his influence to prevent precipitation. But there is such a clamor for an advance that we shall have to go. Politicians, and editors, and red-faced patriots have it all their own way, and old military men are the only men without controlling influence in this camp.'

"But I have a presentiment of victory; and I told Barton so. He laughed, and looked proudly at me, and said:

"'Men with chestnut hair, blue eyes, and sanguine temperament are apt to have hopeful presentiments.'

"The signs of a movement increase. I shall write again as soon as it is over. Arthur."

On the 21st of July was fought the battle of Bull Run,—a most victorious defeat. It ended all over-confidence in the North. It inspired the South with such vain-glorious confidence that it failed, for a year or more, to put forth that power which it had, and then it was too late. It ended all lingering ideas of peace. It ended all further notions of a union party in the South; for, after that battle, those in the South who had held aloof, hoping a peaceful settlement, were swept by the current, and obliged to accept the new government as existing *de facto*, whatever opinions they yet cherished of it *de jure*. It cast the most profound gloom upon the loyal States—a night of shame and sorrow. But out of that night there arose a morning of Purpose such as had not dawned before! There was to be a long and thorough war, and preparation must be broad and thorough! The whole after fruit of this defeat upon the North was bitter to the palate, but wholesome to the people and salutary to the Government.

The battle had begun auspiciously in the morning. McDowell's right wing, crossing Bull Run at Sudley Spring, unperceived and unresisted, had swept down upon the Confederate left, and after various conflicts had driven them step by step back across Young's Branch, across the Warrenton turnpike, and were assailing the centre upon the heights where Beauregard had concentrated his reserves and was making a last stand. But then, between three and four o'clock, one standing at a little distance might have seen the beginnings of one of the most terrible spectacles in war—an army in a panic! For, at this time came in upon the Union right and rear Johnston's forces, just arrived from the Shenandoah Valley. Wearied by long conflict, spent with heat, famished and parched, the raw Northern troops gave way, as the leaves of a forest scatter when October winds, on wet days, drive through the forests. At every moment the confusion increased. Men already broken up in organization streamed tumultuously back toward Bull Run. The contagion spread. Fright grew wild. Men rushed over each other, across all obstacles, stumbling, leaping, with wildest terror; muskets were thrown away—knapsacks had long ago been cast aside—and thousands were madly crowding toward the stone bridge. Others sought the ford, and still others, waiting neither for bridge or ford, splashed into the stream to swim across. In vain did a few fragments, cohering, essay to stop the wild flight

They availed nothing, and were themselves entangled and swept away. A handful of regulars evinced the power of discipline, and, without attempting the hopeless task of holding back the rout, sought only to check pursuit until the fugitives could cross the stream. Once across Bull Run, there was hope of some safety No; confusion grew to a more desperate uproar as the tangled masses receded from the battle field. A few cannon shot thrown across from the Confederate batteries had fallen among the wagons, and the whole corps of teamsters caught the mad infection. They turned and rushed away, many abandoning all at once. Some cut their traces and rode off upon the team horses. Many got their wagons about; but, tangled in the crowd of fugitives, the uproar growing louder and the flight becoming more desperate, wagon locked with wagon, the road became jammed; other wagons coming on, upset the wagons on the road-side, but only to clear a way for a repetition of like scenes. Crowds of citizens, Members of Congress, women and children had come out as to a festive scene, and were caught in the crowd, and went roaring on in the desperate struggle of fright.

The regiment to which Barton belonged had done good service, and had suffered severely. Many of his own company had fallen. But his men were conspicuous for steadiness. By two o'clock the colonel and lieutenant-colonel had been wounded, and the command devolved upon Major Cathcart. When the rout began, he was able to hold his men, and with incredible efforts, to form a sort of rearguard. But his already diminished regiment melted fast. His own Norwood company were firm. But they were only a handful, and the first determined onset of the pursuing enemy scattered them. Then it was that Barton, untired, aroused and glowing, sought no longer how to stay his men, but only how to promote their escape. In all the battle, he had scarcely lost sight of Arthur Wentworth, and now he was convoying him as best he might toward the bridge. Suddenly from his right there swept around a detachment of Confederates that poured their fire upon the spot where Barton stood, and with loud yells rushing in upon them separated Barton from his men, and swept him away a prisoner.

A shot struck Arthur in the neck. He plunged forward Sergeant Belden, and two others of his townsmen, caught him and drew him aside, and by singular address, after exceeding exertions, conveyed him across the stream. At Centerville Arthur was placed in an ambulance, and lay as if asleep. Through that sweet moonlight his few men travelled all night—the heavens so pure and calm, the earth so noisy and ramping—and reached Washington in the gray of the morning. Arthur called for no water. He seemed unconscious of pain. He *was* unconscious, and never suffered more! And so, as a bird flies up out of a storm-shaken forest and seeks more peaceful places, his spirit had lifted itself higher than battle and above its stroke or sound!

Will Belden it was that said, "Arthur, do you suffer much?" and hearing no answer, he laid his hand upon him as to awake one asleep.

He touched his face and drew back in awe and silence!

No blood had issued from his wound, near the base of the brain, and his face was not ghastly, but seemed, in the early twilight, as the face of one who sleeps and dreams pleasantly, so sweet was the expression that had spread over it.

That day the telegraph sped the tidings to Norwood. The message-boy handed the despatch to Agate, saying, as he delivered it—"Arthur is dead."

Agate stood motionless, without voice, white as alabaster. Hearing the voices, Mrs. Wentworth had come into the hall, and in an eager way said:

"What is it, Agate? Speak!"

"Arthur—is—dead!" said Agate, slowly—solemnly—sternly

Mrs. Wentworth sat down upon a bench and looked at Agate imploringly, as if she had suffered wrong at her hands, and could not understand why.

"Dead?—dead, Agate? Who's dead?"

"Arthur Wentworth is dead!"

"Arthur—Wentworth—dead? How is he dead? Tell me, Agate,—what do you mean? Why did he die? Dead? dead? did you say?"

Agate caught her falling, fainting form, and summoning help, bore her to her room. Then Agate, unshaken as if her heart had no pang, with a head as clear as if no tidings had rolled darkness over the family, made every arrangement for the household. She ordered for the children what their daily needs required; she had made every arrangement for Dr. Wentworth to go to Washington long before he came in to tea; she ministered to the darkened room; and all quietly, never mistaking, or confusedly giving an order twice, but in the stillness of severe self-possession.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CONSOLATION.

It was the morning of Sunday, July 28, 1861. Even for that month the morning was singularly glorious. The wind set from the north-west when it breathed at all, and brought the fresh savor of thunder-storms which had played solemn music through the night.

The air was cool. Its moisture gave to the light a peculiar and palpitating tenderness. Old Holyoke looked over upon Norwood with unwonted beauty, and the jagged peaks that rose eastward, bathed in that flame which never consumes, seemed this morning almost human in their sympathy. So thought Dr. Wentworth, who before sunrise walked with God in his garden. Look far around! On every side the earth glows with marvellous beauty *The Lord is in his Holy Temple*, he said, in low tones, to himself. He could not well add, *Let all the Earth keep silence;* for, out of every tree and bush, from the orchard, from the tops of the elms, from the meadows and fields there went up such an ecstasy of bird songs that it was hardly possible to distinguish the separate songs, each bird, as it were, eagerly casting his notes into a medley chorus of sweet sounds, tangled together and jarring against each other in a pleasing dissonance.

Dr. Wentworth was intensely calm. It was the calmness of every faculty, keenly alive but in equipoise. The effort of self-restraint had imparted a slight trace of sternness, but it was a mere enamel upon tenderness. He walked quietly from one part to another, sometimes looking upon flowers, and then, while he was yet looking, he would fall into a reverie. He stooped and plucked a handful of leaves and blossoms, saying, in a half-whisper and in broken sentences, as if reciting in part, and thinking the rest, "He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also a shadow and continueth not;" and then, pausing, he added aloud, with inexpressible sadness, "The eye of him that hath seen him shall see him no more. As the cloud is consumed and van isheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more, neither shall his place know him any more."

He laid down the flowers of which his hand was over full, and forgetting them in a moment, he began plucking others, murmuring, as if to the shrubs, "He hath set darkness in my path, He hath stripped me of my glory and taken the crown from my head, and my hope hath he removed like a tree."

He laid down a fresh clump of gathered flowers, and in a gentle, aimless way, straightened out some of the spray and tangled vine work, as if he were putting little children to bed, meanwhile, hardly above his breath, reciting:

"O, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name. Leave us not!"

His thoughts had reached their saddest when he broke forth into that most utterly hopeless of all utterances of old: "Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little before I go whence I shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness!" From the gloom of these words his soul after a little seemed to rebound, and clear itself, and his thoughts forsook the inexpressible sadness of the olden day, of which the Old Testament is so full and wailing, and, without uttering them, he repeated in his mind that passage in Hebrews that is like a sunrise: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,"—and the rest.

He walked on, seemingly forgetful of his flowers, and looking forth and upward upon the wide arch above, full of morning sunlight, he leaned against the summer-house door, long looking up:

"Therefore they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple,and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

As he stood half chanting in a low voice these words, Rose approached him, but stood silent. After a little, she quietly moved past her father and came into the summer-house from the other side. The sight of Rose seemed to open in her father's soul a flood of tender memories. He trembled, and all at once giving over restraint, "he lifted up his voice and wept." There is something terrible in the uncontrolled weeping of a strong man! Rose was appalled. She had never seen her father weep—she had never seen him lose his self-possession.

When he first learned the fatal tidings of Arthur's death, he only said: "I gave him to the Lord, and He has taken him."

All the way to Washington, and during the night and day of his ride homeward, convoying the beautiful sleeper, he had, though silent and deeply thoughtful, shed no tears. But this tension could not last. He was again at home. The Sabbath had come. The boy was lying in the house, his sword wreathed in green oak leaves upon his coffin. The singular charm of the morning, the train of thought in which his mind had run, all had led him to that point where it needed but some touch to bring tears. So a shrub, gathering dew through the night, carries all its leaves edged with drops, losing none, until some gentle wind shakes it, and then all at once rains down a shower from every branch.

It was while her father was gone to Washington that Rose had tasted the dregs of the cup of grief. But, after a night of suffering and conflict, she came forth strengthened, and from that moment she walked as one who sees the Invisible, in the presence of whom all the earth is as a shadow, and its noises as silence, and its sorrows, like the sighs of childhood, soon hushed in sleep and forgetfulness! She had formed her purposes, and from that hour without a moment's wavering she devoted her whole soul to her new calling.

She waited calmly by her father, tears freely falling down her cheeks, but only in sympathy. The tumult and paroxysm of his grief soon passed, and her father, relieved by this long-needed outburst, came after a little to a peace not to be disturbed. Father and daughter communed together of the dead. He spoke of his hopes, his ambition, his joy and affection for his oldest-born son

"If he could have been spared to render something more of service to the cause, I could have more willingly yielded him. But to be cut off so early, his powers not put to proof, with so little fruit ripened, and in the hour of defeat——"

"Father," said Rose, "there is other work to be done in this great hour of God's coming besides that which is done in the field. It has been shown me that thousands are to mourn; the first-born of many families are to be slain. Only sons are to be taken away. Every household in this land is to be pierced. God is beginning at his own house and among those he loves. It is fit that you who have stood foremost in this community should lead, and in this great day of suffering set the example of sacrifice and consecration. What is there worth living for, and even more worth dying for, if it be not our own country?"

"My daughter, you speak eagerly, enthusiastically. You are excited by what you have passed through."

"I was excited; but, father, I am calm now, and I shall be to the end——"

Then hesitating, as if uncertain whether to go on, she said, at length:

"Father, while you were gone after Arthur, and mother was overwhelmed in such distress, and my own heart seemed giving way, I thought that I could not bear up and sustain myself. For two days, the darkness was dreadful. At length, I could struggle no more. I had slept none for two nights. Mother was sleeping by means of opiates. I went to my room. My thoughts turned to the Saviour. His sufferings for men seemed to rise to my mind. I implored His help. I read the scenes in Bethany, where Lazarus was sick; while the Saviour, though knowing it, delayed to come; and the sisters' anguish at their brother's death! When I came to their reproach, 'Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!' I felt as if I were myself speaking. Then there came to me a sense of the tenderness of Jesus toward them, of His deep sorrow and sympathy with them, such as I had not before ever perceived. In this mood I was struck with His declaration, that all this suffering was permitted for the sake of spiritual good, which they did not understand, nor He explain. In some way, that very not explaining seemed to convey to my mind a sense of the wonderful nature of spiritual life, which lay so far above human experience or language, that the Saviour made no effort whatever to expound it. My heart yielded. I rested on Christ as a little child."

Rose paused for a moment and then resumed:

"Father, what I am going to say you will understand better than I. I do not pretend that it was real. But it produced an impression upon my soul which has not changed. Nor do I desire to shake it off."

"What was it, Rose? Tell me all.

"I lay down upon the bed, and was asleep. How long I had been asleep I cannot tell. I heard Arthur calling to me, 'Rose! Rose!' I opened my eyes—Arthur was there, though I saw nothing of him but, as it were, the print of his face in the air. As I looked, the room disappeared, and I seemed to be in the air. Before me I saw unfolded in the sky lurid clouds connected and rising in a procession, one above another, and each cloud was made up of battling men, and of a mixed multitude of wounded and dying, and each successive cloud advancing, grew larger than the other. I saw flashes of lightning run through them, but heard no sound, though I listened."

Rose paused again, and looked at her father. Had she seen the slightest smile of incredulity, she would have said no more; but Dr. Wentworth was deeply intent.

"My daughter, go on. If there is more, let me hear the whole."

"I saw myself, and you, and others. We moved up and down, relieving the wounded and suffering. Thus far I had not noticed any thing but these lurid clouds, which formed, as it were, steps one above the other. But presently I was moved to look beyond, and I saw what was to the cloud what the second rainbow is to the primary. It was an answering picture, or, as it seemed to my thought, a spiritual translation of the meaning of the cloud scene. I cannot describe it. There was rest, and friendliness, and peace, and gladness, and purity, and joy,—how shall I say?—there were no figures to my senses, and yet my spirit discerned these representations as clearly as my senses did the other. As I looked Arthur came again, and all around us there seemed to be an ineffable peace, and his love seemed to fill the air all about us with rosy light, as if it had been a radiancy of some burning lamp. I was inexpressibly happy, and Arthur was about to tell me some thing, saying, in a significant way, 'Rose! Rose!'——when Agate stood by my bedside, and the morning was advanced, and my vision was all gone. Now, I know what you will say, father, and I do not doubt that I dreamed; but what I think remarkable is, that my whole feeling is changed. I have not had a ripple of trouble since. There is to be great trouble in the land—battles and multitudes of slain and wounded. I am to devote myself to this service, and care for the sick and wounded. I am no longer agitated. I know what that peace is which passes all understanding."

They were here summoned to breakfast, and all the family seemed to have felt that morning that the Sabbath sun had arisen upon them with healing in its wings.

"Shall I wind the clock to-day? asked Agate Bissell of the doctor.

"No, Agate, not to-day. Both ceased to keep time together. Let them stand silent for another day."

It seems that for the first and only time in her life, on that Sabbath day on which the battle of Bull Run was fought, the great black clock in the hall had been forgotten, and had run down. Agate, whose last duty on Saturday night before going to bed was to wind up the clock, had for some unaccountable reason neglected it. The clock, however, had a little time stored up in it for such occasions, and kept on through the night. It was still at its duty in the morning of Sunday, for Agate remembered looking at it and hurrying up the children for Sunday-school. It was some time after noon that its courage began to fail. The ticks had lost their plump sound and grew faint. The right hand swing could hardly be heard, though the left hand was yet decisive. Then it missed the right hand tick altogether, and then the left; and then in silent vibration the pendulum, with diminishing arc, swung on for a moment, and halted. On returning from afternoon service it was discovered. But the doctor said:

"Do not wind it. To-morrow we will have it examined."

Afterward Agate superstitiously believed that it stopped with the speeding of that ball which struck Arthur. And Doctor Wentworth would not, on this funeral day, allow it to be set agoing.

"Let it be for to-day. They ceased to keep time together Let both be silent together.

With this day ended all struggle. It was the day of life from the dead. It was the Lord's day,—pledge of resurrection and immortality. Bent down and obscured by the physical shock and aspects of death, father and mother had at first spoken of their child as dead, as early lost. But now came brighter and brighter every hour the certainty of his living. Their thoughts went upward. along that very path by which the ascending Saviour moved; and their faith sought the child among the ever living and the forever joyful, where sorrow and sighing has passed away!

And when the day was ended, and the thousands who had thronged Norwood to follow this young martyr to the grave had dispersed, and the sun was gone down, and twilight softened the landscape, no one unaccustomed to Christian faith could have believed that the happy household which gathered that night, calm, tender, cheerful, had that day parted from the form of one so loved as was this early victim of war.

"*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, * * came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*"

CHAPTER XLVII.

AFTER-FRUITS.

Had an entire stranger entered Dr. Wentworth's family he would scarcely have suspected that a great sorrow had befallen it. He might remark a tenderness manifested by one toward another, unusual even in the circle of affectionate people. The voice of singing was there, but the music flowed deep, carrying few bubbles upon its surface. Even mirth re-asserted its wholesome sway, but it was manifested more by the dewy freshness given to conversation than by a positive efflorescence of its own. In this case, happily, sorrow worked upon the moral sentiments and developed a serene and high joy! There was no drug in it deadening to the sensibility. All of life had become richer by what it had lost. The heavens seemed nearer. The lightest duties and most trivial offices of daily life seemed colored with celestial hues. When Death is interpreted it means Life. Its ministry is to enrich life, not to rob it. It takes away the flesh, but pours back along the way upon which the departing spirit went a flood of light and influence which heightens the colors and doubles the value of all that remains behind. The worth of common things depends upon the sentiments which we have twined around them. Sorrows are gardeners; they plant flowers along waste places, and teach vines to cover barren heaps. The common duties of life, unblessed, are but as fences of stone, or timber; but blessed with sorrow, each stake carries its twining morning-glory, and mosses picture the stones, and glowing ampelopsis tufts the walls with its autumnal red.

Rose and her mother were conferring in whispers.

"Ask him," said Mrs. Wentworth.

"Father, what is your feeling about—about—our going into mourning?"

A grave smile barely tinged the doctor's face as he replied, scarcely lifting his face from the book which he read:

"It is proper, my daughter, that we should mourn when we are afflicted."

"Father!—you know I did not mean that. Shall we put on the customary mourning clothes?"

"If it is indispensable to your comfort. Do not do it to please me—unless you follow the Scriptural example."

"What example is there, father?" said Rose.

"Read in the twentieth chapter of John," replied the doctor, "and about the middle of the chapter;—let me see—there it is—the eleventh and twelfth."

Rose read aloud—"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre——"

"Yes," interrupted her father, "that is too often our way in grief—we 'stoop down' and we 'look into the sepulchre.' Except by a miracle, they that look into the grave for their dead will find darkness, and gloom, and decay. But I interrupted you—the part that I meant is yet to come."

Rose resumed—"And saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain——"

"Old Francia, before Raphael's day," said Dr. Wentworth, "in a noble Pietà, which is now in the National Gallery in London, represents an angel at the head of Christ, with the expression of *hope*, as one who was looking forward into the future, while the other angel at the feet wears the sorrowful look of one who *remembers* the past. The idea is very beautiful. Since I first saw it I have always interpreted this passage in John's gospel in the same way. Two angels, Hope and Memory, but both in shining white, sat in Christ's sepulchre. The angel of sorrow wore white as much as his fellow. Demonic sorrow should wear black; but Christian faith shows us angels yet hovering at the grave's mouth. Our Arthur is not sleeping there. He is awake, and in Heaven. Why should I wear black for him? His life was Christian and beautiful. He died as a pure offering to Duty and Patriotism—why should I wear black? I thank God for giving me that child. His life was a prolonged mercy to me. I thank God that he has so taken him from me that he is more present than ever, present in every thing, and everywhere, pure, sainted, most beautiful.—Why should I put on black?"

"I think," said Mrs. Wentworth, "that one is shielded by mourning costume from careless inquiries, and from unfeeling intrusion of people."

"No doubt," said her husband, "in a few instances this may be true. But the advantage at best is slight. Well-meaning blunderers are not to be cured so easily."

"But I think, my dear," replied Mrs. Wentworth, "that it is congenial to one's feelings, in a great sorrow, to avoid bright colors, and to be clothed in darker ones."

"That is a matter of education. In so far as high colors have come to signify gayety and pleasure, there may be a good reason for dismissing them. If one would mark one's grief, why not by the color chosen by the Bible to express spiritual things? White signifies purity, triumph, spiritual gladness, and this ought not to be uncongenial to the moods of Christian grief."

"And yet, in the public mind," said his daughter, "there is a seeming want of respect to the memory of the departed, if we make no difference in our ways."

"It is not the custom of our people to symbolize their feelings by a change of dress, with this solitary exception. If a man becomes bankrupt, or has his house burned down, or loses heavily in commercial operations, or has a son in disgrace, or a child misled by evil company, or any other experience of grief, he does not change his garb. The one solitary and exceptional case is bereavement! But there is in domestic sorrow a delicacy, or ought to be, which should shrink from an ostentatiousness such as mourning apparel cannot fail to have. No one has a right so to express his sorrows as to intrude them upon every eye wherever he goes. Custom has long justified it; otherwise, it would be esteemed an indelicacy for one to be a walking advertisement of one's own private griefs. But, even if one were permitted to announce this one side of domestic experience by change of garb, the question still remains, whether expression should be given to the weakness of natural feeling, or the triumph of Christian faith? Whether we should symbolize the darkness of the grave as unenlightened nature shows it, or the grave made luminous by the triumph of our Saviour and the glories of immortality beyond it? We may be sure there is something wrong, in a Christian community where death is surrounded with associations of terror, where the young are reared to a horror of the sepulchre, where present grief rises up like a dark cloud and shuts out the heaven, where—in sermon, services, conversation, and dress—every thing conspires to shroud death and the grave with darkness. Has sorrow a right to be selfish? May it bear false witness against immortality? Has a Christian under bereavement a right to declare by his conduct, 'There is no light in the grave, none beyond it, and no comfort for the bereaved but only black, black, black sorrow!' I never met one muffled in black from head to foot, without a certain horror. The smell of crape is to me like the smell of a charnel-house!

"Did it ever occur to mourners to ask, what, if those for whom I grieve were to speak to me out of their blissful rest in heaven, would be their choice—that I should be shrouded like one in despair, or robed as one who mourns, but with Christian hope?"

Nothing further was replied, and the subject dropped.

A great change had taken place in Rose. At length she had an object in life, which was of sufficient magnitude and interest to develop and occupy all her powers. Hitherto her life had been bright, tranquil, and happy. Yet, at times, there had crept upon her a deep sense of dissatisfaction with herself. What was she accomplishing? To wait in elegant idleness for some domestic settlement, violated both her moral sense and her delicacy. And yet, what was she doing commensurate with the powers which had been entrusted to her and the culture which they had received?

She had revolved in her mind many projects without settling upon any. At one time she was seriously bent upon leaving home and seeking a place in the South or West as a teacher, and desisted from the purpose only on seeing how much pain it would give her parents. She also revolved plans of teaching at or near home, but found that she could do it only by dispossessing others who depended upon teaching for their bread. Sometimes she thought of art as a field of usefulness, but was convinced that in no other department of life was usefulness so dependent upon the very highest talents as in the ministry of the beautiful.

But the war, which was now disclosed, opened a field fo every power which she possessed. Her brother's early fall seemed to be a call to her to enlist in the same cause, and make his place good. And though, at first, she did not see the particular way in which she could enter this field of humanity, yet she never for a moment doubted that she was called of God, and that He would in His own time and manner, open her path before her.

With her mother she did not speak of her intentions. To her father she disclosed her wishes, and when his natural shrinking from the thought of the toil and exposure were overcome, he began to aid Rose in her preparation. He placed in her hands works or parts of works that would give her such general knowledge of physiology and of therapeutics as would furnish a proper basis for right nursing. In conversations, he gave her also much information upon gunshot wounds, surgery, and particularly on military surgery. He enlarged upon hospital treatment—air, cleanliness, and the medicinal effect of cheerfulness and moral sentiments. Rose's industry was most unremitting. Her power of acquisition, always remarkable, was stimulated to the highest degree. She soon conceived a love of the study for its intrinsic interest, and brought to the study of medicine an enthusiasm, an apprehensiveness, a tact and delicacy which few medical students possess.

Not content with books, she insisted upon riding with her father, at least enough to wear off that shrinking from suffering so natural to a sensitive nature.

"Remember, Rose," her father would say, "that you are to be a nurse, not a surgeon. For the active practice of medicine, or the performance of surgery, you know enough to be only a good charlatan! But with modesty and your good sense, you know enough to aid you materially in nursing."

During the summer, Norwood, in common with every town and village in the North, was filled with zeal, both in raising the quota required of Massachusetts by the call for a half-million of men, and in providing for the soldiers' comfort in the camp and for necessaries for sickness and wounds. Old linen came to a good market! Bandages of all widths, and in endless quantities, were provided. Lint was scraped in every house. Sick dresses, drawers, shirts and stockings, held high jubilee, and found themselves in great honor. Sewing circles in every church! sewing circles in almost every other house! sewing circles on every day of the week, except Sunday; and even then, there was unrebuked talk about sewing circles!

About the middle of this summer was organized the most magnificent voluntary charity ever recorded. Experience had found in every nation, that the Medical Department of the army however thoroughly organized and faithfully served, had, by virtue of its connection with the machinery of the army, a certain formality and precision which was inconsistent with elasticity and suppleness. It was a wheel in a complicated machine, and its revolutions must be determined by its relations to its fellow wheels.

The SANITARY COMMISSION undertook not to supersede, but to supplement and assist, the Medical Department of the army. Its career is as notable as any single feature of the war. In no other nation has the compassion of the people for their soldiers resulted in so wonderful an organization, which, by voluntary contributions from citizens, disbursed during four years, of money and material, between twenty and thirty millions of dollars.

It was October before Rose let her mother know of her intentions. She had prepared herself to meet any objection, and adduce any persuasion necessary to overcome maternal reluctance, inspired by love. To her surprise, the announcement of her purpose was received with prompt favor, and a vehement opposition was raised in an unexpected quarter.

"Rose," said her mother, "I am glad you are going. You are the very one to go. I wish I could go too."

"Well," said Agate Bissell, with a look of unfeigned amazement, "I have heard a good deal about the singularities of the Wentworths, but this beats them all. I wonder what will come next!"

"Why, Agate? What is there so remarkable or eccentric in a woman's going to hospitals to nurse wounded soldiers?"

"Of course women ought to go," said Agate. "But I don't think it the place for young and pretty girls! I guess you've little idea of what soldiers are, or what camp life is!"

"But somebody must go," said Rose, smiling at Agate's earnestness.

"To be sure there must. But homely folks aren't all dead yet, nor old folks, nor middle-aged folks. When all these are used up it will be time to try the young and handsome ones!"

"Really, Agate," said Rose, very much amused. "I never knew you so complimentary before. think I shall have to go, even if I wear a veil to save the young soldiers' hearts while I dress their wounds. It would be sad indeed to make worse wounds than one cures!"

"Do you mean to say, Miss Rose, that you are going?—or only that you are thinking about it?"

"As sure as my life is spared, Agate, I shall go, and that before many days."

"Then, as sure as my life is spared, you won't go alone!"

"What, Agate," said Mrs. Wentworth, "you don't mean to go yourself?"

"I do mean to go myself! If Rose will venture on so rash a business, it's high time for somebody to go along and take care of her."

Without more ado, Agate turned and went to her room, selected the few things which she needed, finished all her packing within an hour, except a few articles yet to be made, and came down to see to the tea, as if she had merely been getting ready to go to the prayer-meeting. She said nothing further on the subject of the conversation, except to Rose:

"I am all ready. You can start when you please."

It was Wednesday on which this scene occurred. The next Monday was fixed as the day for departure. Agate, though ready, night or day, to leave, was yet glad of the respite, chiefly because on the next afternoon she would have one more opportunity of attending the female prayer-meeting.

Let us look in on the meeting.

In a small room, about three in the afternoon, were gathered nine women, every one of them mothers, except Agate Bissell.

Polly Marble was there, with her great spectacles mounted up on her withered face, as if the sun had used them as lenses and dried every particle of moisture out of the features behind them. One or two others were melancholy and silent women, plain farmers' or mechanics' wives, who had evidently struggled much with sorrow. Miss Pifkins was there—a sharp saint, who ferreted out people's sins with a zeal and assiduity which rendered her grace most savory. In action she was really kind. Her hand was bountiful. In sickness she knew no limit to service. No one in trouble had ever a better friend. It was her tongue that played the part of Law, while her heart acted the Gospel. Her prayers were often but salutary lectures. When any wickedness had disturbed the town she was apt to have great liberty in prayer at the next meeting. "There is no use in mincing matters. Sin is exceedingly sinful, and we may as well out with it, as to smother it all up with excuses and mercy and all that sort of thing."

Good Mrs. Taft was there, as sweet as twilight in June. So was Mrs. Goodhue, who never failed to go to sleep. She was round, rosy, good-natured. There was a smile spread out under her very skin, which nothing could rub out. Trouble had tried it, but failed. Stern religious views had tried it, but her round, rosy face smiled on. Age now was trying it; but though it could dry up the hair, change its color, convex the eye-ball and disturb its functions, it did not get on with the face. *That* shone and smiled at fifty very much as it did at twenty-five.

Mrs. Goodhue came unfailingly to prayer-meeting—I could never tell why; for, as soon as the preliminary talking was over and business began, she dropped asleep. She waked easily—waked to kneel down, and waked to rise up again. She was always asked to pray, and always said, in a sweet voice, "No, I thank you." So much for externals. There is another side.

A mother is praying. Before her is opened the other world and the listening Saviour. She is praying for children, meaning her own. Her heart is deep. Her love is the whole treasure of her life. She believes her children in danger of eternal ruin. She is imploring succor. Listen, as her voice, low and tremulous, rises with the intensity of feeling, and grows musical. Listen! as her emotions swell, how sentences dissolve in passionate feeling, tears fall, and sobs are uttered, and low sighs on every side attest the sympathy. Respect such a scene! Respect is a poor and barren word for such fervor of faith and fidelity of love.

And now Agate prays. She has imparted to her friends her impending journey and errand. Her heart is full. There is not a word for herself. She prays for the country, for the church and for the cause of God. She prays for the afflicted family in which she lives; for the one who is going to minister to the sick and dying: and all her petition is that Rose may be wise in directing dying sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. As she proceeds, all formality of tone is gone. At last Agate is free, when she can, without let or hindrance, pour forth that silent soul in full utterance before God. Her words rise in power and dignity. She falls into the language of the Old Testament. She seems greater than woman—some prophetess returned to our days—with wealth of affection and chastened familiarity! She pours out her innermost feelings before her Redeemer; and so real is it, that, standing, as I do, and listening, I half expect to see the clouds part and the celestial vision appear. Ah! when women's hearts are unfolded in the presence of their God, he must be base-minded indeed who remembers their pinched faces, their angular forms, their ungraceful ways, while their kindled souls are giving utterance to the very passionateness of love and worship! Few places on earth are so near to heaven as where Christian wives and mothers pray for their families.

When Agate returned home there was nothing unusual in her look or manner. It was no unusual feeling she had experienced. The hidden life was mightier and nobler in Agate than the revealed one. Her faith was not only a tabernacle of joy in times of sorrow, but a pavilion where she was hidden till the storm was overpast.

There were two surprises in reserve for Rose before she left. Alice Cathcart came on Saturday night, as she often did, to pass the Sabbath day in town, and on this night she was radiant with joy. Barton had been exchanged, and was now in Washington with his regiment. He expected, however, to be at home the next week to take the colonelcy of one of the new regiments. Frank Esel was to be his lieutenant-colonel!

"Then you have had letters?" said Rose.

"Yes. Do you know that, until he reached Washington, he knew nothing of Arthur's death? His letter is very full of Arthur. He loved him, he says, more than if he were a brother. How strange it seems, when you have had a great sorrow, and months have passed, until you begin to grow used to it, to see it break upon some one, as this news did on Barton, as if it had just happened, and all the freshness and particularity of your sorrow comes back to you in an echo from another heart!"

While they thus sat in the open door, talking of the loved and absent, and both of them thinking, down deeply in the silence of the heart, of other things which their lips would not reveal, a robin flew into one of the trees in the meadow, and began singing that plaintive call for its mate which one hears so often in sum mer. It is the robin's sweetest and most spirited song, and few strains there are that surpass it in tenderness, clearness and brilliancy. Rose had always associated this evening robin-song with the idea of a love-call to one absent. To-night it seemed more yearning and passionate than usual. She followed the bird with her eye. At first he sat patiently and sang. Then, as if surprised that no response followed, it gave new force to its call. Now, growing restless, it changed place, singing in turn from several trees, and jerking itself nervously, as if really alarmed at last lest it were forsaken. It seemed to Rose to say, " The night is coming on. Where is my love? Oh! is he harmed? Am I forsaken?" It grew dark rapidly; the song ceased; the bird flew silently away as if there was nothing left to sing for. There was silence in the air and among the trees. Rose too became silent and thoughtful. At length she said, abruptly:

"*Colonel* Cathcart! Who would have dreamed in the old happy days, when we were all children, and he was so shy and yet so bold, that we should grow to this?—he in the army, and I in the army hospitals! I did not see him, Alice, before he left. You will meet him next week, but I shall be in Washington. This is playing at cross-purposes."

Alice had something else to tell; but, as if there was a pleasure in keeping it back, she waited till the evening was spent, and they were preparing for sleep, when she said, looking at Rose earnestly, and yet mirthfully, with her great black eyes:

"Rose, won't you tell any body if I will tell you something?"

"Of course not, if it is a secret."

"Well, I too am going with you and Agate. Father has consented; mother always wanted me to go. But I am to wait till next Spring. Then, if the war is not over, father says I may go out in the service of the Sanitary Commission and join you. And Hiram Beers says he's too old to go a soldiering, but that if Agate can find out that he can do any thing to help in the hospitals, he'll wind up this Winter and come out in the Spring with me."

Joined as their lives had ever been, it was a joy to Rose that they were to be inseparable still: and though some months were to elapse before Alice would come to her, yet by that time Rose would have become used to the work, and could smooth the way for Alice.

The seed sown by Florence Nightingale brought forth a plentiful harvest in America. Wherever hospitals were established were found women of energy and devotion who gave their time to ministrations of mercy. They came from every position in society yet to the honor of true culture be it said, that women from circles of wealth and refinement led in this merciful crusade.

Mrs. Wentworth, with maternal anxiety, would have overoaded our pilgrims with preparatives. Agate Bissell, however refused all help.

"Why, Mrs. Wentworth, we are not going where fine clothes will do us any good. Few things and strong, are all we want. When they are used up we'll send for more."

"She is right," said Dr. Wentworth. "A life among field hospitals is as near a total revolution of ordinary experience as can be conceived. It will be a spectacle of Christian refinement going down to the very border of savage life on an errand of love. Now, Rose, you are walking in His very footsteps, 'who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich.' Great joy is before you if you go in that spirit. But it is a joy unknown to common life,—the very joy of self-sacrificing Benevolence.—But what *is* Agate building up with her needle, Rose?"

"Well, father, it may be called a Paradise of Pockets; other wise, nursing aprons."

"You may laugh now," said Agate, very composedly, "but when we go into the field, and follow the march, with men every other step faint or wounded, you will find these aprons better than lugging a carpet-bag."

There were pockets on the sides and pockets on the front, pockets low down and pockets high up, pockets for thread and needles, pockets for buttons, tape, and small things, pockets for small rolls of bandages and lint—pockets for knives, scissors, and comb and brushes, a pocket for vials and one for a good brandy flask.

The cloak may be described as a congeries of small bags so arranged that the wearer, if strong enough to stand up under the load, could carry in it a reasonable supply of comforts and restoratives for a small household.

Although the doctor made merry over Agate's contrivances he admired her sagacity in foreseeing the nature of her work.

"It is not every one who has served in a campaign that is as well instructed as Agate seems to be before she has seen a single wounded man."

"Any body that ever did any nursing," said Agate, "can imagine pretty much what they've got to do. In the hospitals I expect we shall have every thing provided. But in the fields I guess we shall have to provide for ourselves—at any rate a good part of the time. It's better to have these things and not want them, than to want them when you get there and not have them."

Dr. Buell, on the last Sunday before the little party started, bore them in memory, and the fervor and tenderness with which he prayed for all who went forth to succor the needy, manifestly showed that his thoughts were with Agate and Rose. Indeed, though not his custom, he spent the Sabbath evening with the Wentworths. Although they were to leave on Monday, there was nothing to tempt Agate to the least work on Sunday. She was twice at church, and with her Sunday-school class as well prepared as if there had been no unusual outfit going on, for by ten o'clock on Saturday night the last stitch had been fastened, the last string tied, every thing was packed and laid ready for early departure on Monday.

"Why, Agate," said Mrs. Wentworth, "you will work on Sundays, will you not, when you are in the field?"

"Of course I shall. Works of necessity and of mercy are proper on Sunday. When folks live at home and have the whole week to themselves there need not be many such works left for Sunday—not if they have any conscience about it. But I think nowadays folks make Sunday a kind of rubbish-day. They save up all the little odds and ends, through the week, that won't pay, and then on Sunday call 'em works of necessity and mercy. I call 'em works of laziness. Any body that *wants* to keep Sunday to the Lord, will keep an eye to it all the week. My opinion is, that the reason why folks don't like Sunday is, that they don't know what it is to have a day full of real peace, up to the brim, from morning to night, and sweet as milk."

"She'll do," said Dr. Wentworth to his wife, in an undertone, and in an amused way. "Before Agate gets back she will have learned something about the world; but I'm mistaken if other people don't learn something about a real plain New England woman!

It's a pity that some man had not the good sense to win so much sense and goodness."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Wentworth, with a slight cast of her eye at the other side of the room, "some other people are of your mind."

"What?" said the doctor, "you don't mean——"

"*I* don't mean—but I think Dr. Buell does."

Why *will* people pry into other people's business? There sat Dr. Buell properly enough, neither saying soft things to Agate nor exchanging glances. All that he had ever done was to consult Agate, within the last six months, respecting the religious interests of the parish; and any minister might have done that with profit. Her judgment was worth any wise man's consideration. Dr. Buell was grateful for it, and expressed his sense of thanks by the cordiality with which he shook Agate's hand; and if it lingered in his, it was because the good man was growing absent-minded.

When Mrs. Wentworth had slyly hinted to Agate that Dr. Buell would lack for counsel when she was gone, Agate's manner showed that there was no foundation whatever for Mrs. Wentworth's sly humor. Her cheek flushed slightly, and her eye, with resentful good nature, flashed a little, but did not turn away; she looked the doctor's wife full in the face, while she said:

"I know what you mean. It's no such thing. The doctor has never said a word to me that any body might not hear, and he's no ideas about it anyhow."

"About what, Agate?" said Mrs. Wentworth, in the most innocent manner, "ideas about what?"

Agate walked out of the room with some emphasis in her movement; yet her principles enabled her to keep good-natured.

On Monday they left for Washington, to enter upon their new and strange duties.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A NEW LIFE.

It was indeed a new life to Rose more than to Agate; for Rose's life had dealt less with business and more with sentiment, while Agate's had been trained to practical affairs. There was a hospital in Washington which had suffered from the incompetence both of nurses and surgeons. After a few weeks the medical director of the Department was glad to place Agate Bissell there as superintendent and matron, while Rose became her assistant.

Agate's entrance upon her duties was the signal of alarm among a multitude of unworthy attendants. It can be likened to nothing better than the entrance of a conscientious cat into a house where rats and mice have had unmolested liberty. There was racing and scampering, hiding and peeping out of holes, alarm and cunning; but, one by one, each culprit was surprised and despatched, to the great comfort and stillness of the household.

Hospital stores were no longer squandered nor consumed by nurses and attendants. Wines and brandies now found their way oftener to the wounded than to those who waited on them. The special diet suddenly improved in quality, in regularity, and in a certain feminine neatness and refinement.

"I say, Jim, there's a new hand at the bellows in this shop—we never had things afore like this!"

"That's so; the old 'un is a cap'n. I tell ye she drills 'em, she does. When she fust came and I heerd her dressin' down some of the nusses, I thought we'd got a tartar. Lord bless her, though, when she comes to the sick 'uns—you'd think she's ten mothers rolled into one!"

"This is the first time," weakly sighed a mere skeleton of a man, on the next couch, "that any thing has tasted good since I got here."

Agate's zeal of neatness had the eagerness of the hunting instinct. She brought every thing to order. She established a method for all things, and compelled its observance or dismissed the refractory. She stood very little upon ceremony. She expressed her opinion upon persons just as unhesitatingly as upon things. Every day her heart yearned more and more for "her boys," as she called the patients. In a month's time a perfect revolution had taken place. The hospital, which was the very worst, had risen to become a model. She did not confine her labors to her subordinates. She had lived too long with Dr. Wentworth not to know what conscientious medical practice was. She rebuked the assistant surgeons when they neglected their proper duties, and became such a thorn in their sides that they determined to oust her. She helped on that purpose. One morning she found out that, though it was eleven o'clock, no special diet list had been made out for one of the wards, the assistant surgeon in charge having been on a "spree" the night before. He was sleeping off his drunkenness. When at length he came, Agate confronted him with an eye that did not seem pleasant for him to look upon. With a few cold but terrible sentences, she brought the blood to his cheeks.

"Well, well," said the surgeon, with ill concealed annoyance, "what's the matter now?"

"Matter enough, as you shall soon find out. All these sick men left without attention or food, that you might indulge a brutal appetite! And then do you dare, sir, attempt to face me down with your impudence? You'd better pull off those shoulder-straps and resign."

"This a great fuss over a little matter," said the surgeon, who was more alarmed than he was willing to show. "I know my own business, and I shan't tolerate your meddling."

"I know my business, too," replied Agate, fiercely, "and you shall find it out. I'll pull off that shoulder-strap before you're a week older."

When he was gone, some of the attendants were greatly alarmed, dreading his influence with his superiors.

"Oh, ma'am, he'll have it jest his own way. He'll get up a report, and them's above him will think it all right, and first thing we know, you'll be sent off to some other work. I've seen how things go here."

"Don't you be troubled," said Agate, quietly, and went on with her work.

Sure enough, within a week came a new matron with an order superseding Agate Bissell. As the woman seemed to be both sensible and kindly, Agate said:

"I wish you would withhold this matter till afternoon."

"Certainly, madam, if it will make a difference with you."

"It *may* make a good deal—with some other folks."

Agate immediately gave things in charge to Rose, put on her bonnet and shawl, and started for the White House. She had never been used to riding in hacks; and, although the distance was great and the walking very bad, she bravely sped her way to the President's mansion.

The waiting-man at the door looked at her very much as a dog looks at a stranger, to see whether it is worth his while to bark or not. The inspection, however, seemed favorable. He pointed to the stairs and said:

"Go up."

Not knowing whither, Agate obeyed and went up. Landing in a wide hall, a folding door stood open, in which she saw some fifteen or twenty people waiting. A door-keeper stood at the first door on the right as she entered, receiving cards, which he carried into the President's reception-room, and then, from time to time, as parties came out, he called to one and another to enter. Agate approached him and said:

"Is the President in?"

"Yes, ma'am. Let me have your card, if you please."

"Tell him that Agate Bissell wants to see him."

"Let me write your name. Perhaps you'll do it yourself, on this card!"

Within half an hour she was admitted. The room was large, and furnished scarcely better than a country lawyer's office. A large open fire-place was on the right side of the room as she entered. On the left hand wall hung many maps. One also there was over the mantelpiece, apparently just drawn in ink, and giving the country between the Potomac and Richmond. A large, long table covered with green baize stood in the middle of the room, and beyond it, near to the windows on the side opposite the door, was a similar table at which sat a long, lean, grandfatherish man. He was running his left hand through stiff and long black hair, now beginning to be struck through with gray. His features were large, and seemed, like chance travellers at an inn, to have put up together for a night, rather than to have been a family of relations.

"Well, ma'm," said he, in a broad country accent, his voice somewhat drawling and shrill, "this is Agate Bissell, I s'pose. What can I do for you?"

"You can do nothing for *me*," said Agate Bissell, firmly, but with great respect; for she had a profound New England reverence for a chief magistrate of the nation, queer as she thought the specimen now before her—"you can do nothing for me, but you can do a good deal for the soldiers."

"Well, what is it?"

Agate briefly narrated her experience, to which the President listened gravely, and she ended by saying:

"I wish, Mr. President, that you would ask the chief medical director here, to look into this matter with his own eyes, and not to take his opinion from drunken underlings, who, while soldiers shot down in battle are lingering and dying before him, is lying beastly drunk, and then would turn out of charge those who rebuke him. Oh! Mr. President, how can any body doubt the doctrine of total depravity when they see the wretches robbing wounded soldiers, eating the delicacies sent to them, and drinking their cordials, and letting their wounds stink and rot, from carelessness? It's enough to touch a stone's heart."

Mr. Lincoln's heart was no stone.

"Madam, I will give you a note to the doctor, and do you go and talk to him jest as you have to me."

He sat down and took an unglazed visiting card, and wrote with a pencil:

"Dr. ———. Please hear this woman's statement, and make inquiry in person, and if it is true, put her back, and pray for twenty more such women. A. LINCOLN."

"There—do you go yourself. If any thing turns up, and it don't go right, you come to me again. Let me see. Agate Bissell—Agate Bissell—yes, I'll remember your name and some time I'll come down and see how you're getting along."

Armed with this, Agate soon found the medical director It required but little time to satisfy him. She was reinstated, the assistant surgeon was dismissed the service, and great fear fell upon all who had to do with Agate!

That evening Rose said—"What kind of a man did you find the President to be?"

"A very good *man*," said Agate—"but I didn't see much President about him. But I s'pose he had not got his official clothes on, and so he did not rumple up his feathers much."

While Agate played the General, Rose, in her own way, was quite as efficient. She had, what many noble fellows in this labor of love had not, ample command of money. She sought to cheer the sick and wounded, by relieving the barren wards of their cold and forlorn appearance. She procured cheerful engravings, suited to the tastes of the men, and hung them where they could easily see them. She went daily to the green-houses for flowers, and distributed them through the wards. "It does not require masses of flowers," she would say. "A single bud with a leaf, by a cot, is is often far more prized than a large bouquet would be." In this way, the convalescents had each some token, and many of the men begged leave to send home these offerings to their mothers or sisters.

Rose showed great skill in conversation with the men, and imparted to them much religious truth. He must have been a hardened man indeed who could not listen to her sweet voice, reading in low tones by his bedside the psalms of David, or the Evangelists.

"Why, Tom," said a wounded man to an Irish soldier, who lay next him, "I thought you was a Catholic? How dare you let a heretic read the Bible to you?"

"She's no hiritic, I tell ye. D' ye think they make hiritics of such as thim? Ye couldn't keep her out of hiven, more'n you can keep the birds out of the gardens. If you druv 'em away iver so many times, they'll fly back agin, sure!"

The experience gained in Washington was such that when, in the spring and summer of 1862, McClellan made his ill-fated campaign of the Peninsula, Agate, Rose, and Alice, who had joined them, followed the army, and served in the brigade and regimental hospitals. During battles, they hovered upon the edge of the conflict, preparing food for the wounded, aiding in binding up their wounds, furnishing them with stimulants, and comforting the dying.

Now it was that Rose found her whole soul drawn forth. Every power was taxed. She rose to the necessities of the hour in a manner which made her the admiration of all. Perhaps she could not surpass Agate in the methodical administration of business, in the routine of wards in hospital, although she equalled her, and grew every day in strength and endurance. But she surpassed Agate in *medical sense.* She had evidently inherited her father's medical tact and insight; and, though she avoided taking the surgeons' work out of their hands, her quickness and aptitude were of continual service even to medical men.

But far more than these things was Rose noticed for her courage and her power of inspiring men with hope, and cheer, and courage. Her resources of thought, her wealth of feeling, her great power of expression, her imagination and humor seemed endless. Indeed Alice wrote truly when she said to her parents that Rose had broken forth into a new life. All those resources which lay untaxed in her former quiet life, were now developed into an even and steady enthusiasm. Her pity and tenderness made her presence to the sick and wounded like a light shining upon them from their own home. In different places, she earned for herself among the soldiers pet names. They played upon her name and styled her the "Ever-blooming Rose." And when she brought coffee, or fragrant tea, made as no one else knew how to suit it to their taste, they naturally called her the "Tea-Rose." In other camps she was known as the "Norwood Beauty,"—and she *was* beautiful! The constant play of courage, pity, benevolence, and the enthusiasm of patriotism had given to her face a radiant outlook peculiarly charming.

She accompanied the troops and returned with them from the Peninsula. She returned to Washington to care for the multitudes of wounded that came in from Pope's disastrous campaign. She went with the wagons of the Commission to Antietam, and hovered along that field wherever were wounded and suffering. It was here that she was inspired by danger and desperate necessity to take the surgeon's knife.

In a small house, so near to the battle that shot were flying around it in every direction, were collected multitudes of the wounded. The surgeon was in the act of amputating a shattered leg. Rose stood near, his only assistant. The saw had half-severed the bone, when a cannon-shot struck him dead. The patient was left bleeding. Seized with an inspiration, Rose, without an instant's hesitation, put her hand to the saw, completed the severing, tied the arteries, joined the flaps, and bound up the wound. The man recovered. She had often been called the "Surgeon's Daughter;" but now the men changed it, and called her the "Daughter-surgeon."

Alice was never separated from Rose. They worked together, rode and travelled together, slept together. Scarcely less than Rose was Alice admired and beloved by the common soldiers. She often sang to them in the hospitals, wrote their letters home, received dying messages and faithfully transmitted them to friends at home.

The heroism of the war received its highest illustration in that band of noble women who followed the flag through darkness and blood, toiling as no soldiers on the march toiled, enduring hardships which none surpassed, facing all the dangers of the battlefield, and many others in hospitals even more perilous than bullet or shell, and in many instances offering their lives as a sacrifice to humanity and religion! The evangelists of a true gospel were they, sowing the good seeds of peace in the furrows of war!

Alice Cathcart was not less patriotic in her feelings than Rose. But for some reason, she added to these generous impulses a peculiar pity and tenderness toward the sick and wounded rebel prisoners. This disposition drew forth from Hiram Beers many criticisms and discussions.

"I think you might use your time better'n to be curin' up the fellows that fought us, so's to fight agin."

"Why, Hiram," said Alice, imploringly, "they are not our enemies now that they are sick and helpless. The poor and sick the world over should be like their own children to the well and the merciful."

"You may have 'em, if you want. But you won't catch me adoptin' sech a scaly set o' children. I'll tell ye, you're fattenin' 'em up agin to shoot down our boys. It's like geese and chickens goin' round to cure up all the sick foxes."

"Would you let them suffer, Hiram? would you see them die without a crumb from our stores?" said Alice, in a plaintive way.

"Wal, mebbe I'd give 'em the crumbs, but I wouldn't give 'em a slice round the whole loaf. The fact is, you give 'em cakes and gingerbread, and that's running kindness into the ground, I'm thinkin'," said Hiram.

Agate Bissell came to the rescue.

"Hiram Beers, you old hypocrite, what do you want to tease that child for? You know you don't believe a word you're saying. I should like to know who 'twas that ran about last week for clothes and stockings for the shivering prisoners; and who 'twas that looked after those two boys in ward ten, when we were in the hospital? You know you're just plaguing Alice. Alice, don't mind a word he says. His tongue is of no more account than the shaking of the leaves on the trees."

It fell out that after the battle of Antietam there fell to Alice's care, among others, a young rebel officer, evidently a person of refinement and position. He entered into no conversation. His wounds were severe, and probably fatal. For several days he maintained a proud and almost defiant reserve. His face wore the expression of suffering, though he carefully avoided all tokens of pain.

He seemed reluctant to get well at the hands of Northerners. Alice hovered about him as if there was some fascination which wrought upon her. Nor was her labor of love unregarded. Little by little the young officer showed a pleasure in her presence, and a docility which he manifested to no one else. That pride and repugnance which sickness and suffering could not break, began sensibly to yield to kindness.

As he grew weaker, his large eyes, set in an emaciated face-frame, followed Alice as she came or left, as a child's eyes follow a mother. As he declined, Alice, as often as she could snatch time, read to him the Word of God, or sang hymns in a low, sweet voice.

"I know not what it is," said she to Rose, "but I seem to have met this gentleman before. Of course I do not suppose that I have; but there is something in his voice at times that startles me. I can hardly help saying, 'Where *have* we met before?' Last evening, when I sung to him, a tear ran down his cheek and he said, 'That's my brother's favorite hymn.' He turned his face to me and said:

"'Will you be kind enough to tell me your name?'

"I repeated that it was Alice Cathcart, of Norwood, in Massachusetts."

"He seemed agitated, and looked intently at me, and repeated it several times—'Ah! Alice—Cathcart.' Then, pausing as if his mind ran back over some memory, he said, musingly,—'Alice Cathcart! That is very singular, that both of us should have fallen under your care.'

"'Both of us?' I asked, inquiringly. 'Have I ever met you before?'

"I was just then called away. But to-morrow, if he seems disposed to conversation, I mean to find out more about him."

Very early in the morning, before the sun was up—before it was fairly light—Alice was summoned to her patient. Mid-September fogs clouded the air and drenched the grass and leaves with wet. She felt a chill shivering as she hastened to meet the call. He was fast sinking. It was evident that death was upon him. He revived a little. Looking upon her, he said:

"Alice, don't leave me. I have much to say."

Then, his voice sinking to an inaudible whisper, his lips moved for a minute or more. A little stimulant was given him, and for a second he revived, as a fire on which a handful of shavings is thrown.

"Tell my mother, Alice"—and his voice died away, though still his lips moved.

Once or twice Alice could distinguish names, but all the rest was undistinguishable. He lay for a few moments in perfect stillness. Suddenly the light came to his eyes, and he looked around eagerly as if following a vision. It was but a flash. The flame went out and all was still.

Alice, although familiar with every form of suffering, was so much affected by the death of the young rebel officer that Agate Bissell insisted upon her retiring.

Agate herself gave orders for his burial. His few effects were gathered up. His watch and a pocket-book were the only valuables. On examining them, there were found several letters from his home—one from his brother, a colonel in the rebel army—and his own name,

HENRY C. HEYWOOD,
Lnychburg, Va.

Agate called Rose to her.

"This young man is your friend Tom Heywood's brother—the brother *Hal* he used to mention so often."

Rose was scarcely less affected than Alice had been. For a moment she was overcome; but, quickly recovering herself, she enjoined upon Agate the most profound secrecy.

"For reasons which I cannot tell, you must not mention this name to Alice. It will do no good, and will do much harm."

Agate's sharp sagacity needed no further help. She had her own thoughts, but was satisfied to leave Rose to manage the matter as it pleased her.

At the evening twilight young Heywood was quietly buried, and the place marked securely. As soon as the opportunity could be found his few effects were sent to his friends and with them a note to his mother.

"MY DEAR MADAM:—After your son was wounded and captured on the second day of the battle of Antietam, he came to the hospital of which I have charge. Every attention was paid to him. A faithful friend ministered to his religious wants with the fidelity and tenderness of a sister. His last thoughts rested upon his home. He called by name his various relatives, and would have sent messages, had not his death been more sudden than he anticipated. I pray you to allow me, as a friend of Mr. Thomas Heywood, to express my deep sympathy with you.

"ROSE WENTWORTH."

CHAPTER XLIX.

THANKSGIVING.

When November came in 1862, came also in Norwood the renowned Thanksgiving Day, the holiday of old New England from its founding. The Pilgrims found it written, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." This beautiful poetry was translated into the policy of the Pilgrims by establishing a Fast-day, in March or April, and a Day of Thanksgiving in November. Thus the whole people were to pass through the two gates of the year, Tears and Smiles, and observe them as Holy Days, all other profane and misleading festivities—Christmas, New Year's, and Saints' days without number, being laid aside. Both days, the Day of Fasting and the Day of Thanksgiving, were to be esteemed religious days, and so kept. On the forenoon of each the people were to assemble in their churches for religious services and a sermon. On these days good ministers were allowed a wider pasture than was befitting the Sabbath Day, and were expected to discourse upon public affairs. So that the pulpit had two safety valves, and the minister could give vent to his opinions upon matters and things in general twice a year without danger of being unsettled, on the one side, or, on the other, of exploding from pent-up fire.

If any where, a Fast Day ought to flourish in New England. Not that its people were acerb and superstitious, but they derived their tendencies from fathers who had suffered persecutions, and to whom "strong crying and tears" were familiar; and as the religious convictions of its people are deep, and their views of duty stern, one day in three hundred and sixty-five for public fasting could not seem unreasonable.

In the beginning, it was a day of *fasting.* The steps of decline are melancholy and instructive. "Nothing should be eaten between the rising and the setting of the sun," would seem a plain rule. But many people refused such rigor, and ate their breakfast with the foresight that it must last till supper, leaving out dinner by way of fasting.

But soon, while breakfast and supper were left as abutments on each side, the span was so long that a pier of crackers and cheese was built up in the middle, to carry the fasting safely over. Now all engineers know that a crib sunken in a stream, or a pier, is apt to become a point around which a deposit is soon formed, and even islands have thus grown up from a stake driven down or a mere lodgment of brush. And so it was with Fast-day. Crackers and cheese became premises of an argument. If crackers may be eaten without violation of fast, why not gingerbread? As the court before which these questions were brought often held its sessions in the stomach, the case was decided in favor of gingerbread.

Thus, with lamentable blindness, doughnuts were added; and to doughnuts (with astonishing infatuation) dried smoked-beef; though, with a latent sense of the danger, it was shaved exceedingly thin; to dried beef was added cold chicken—small, but young and tender; and to this, cold corn-beef. A plain apple-pie also got foot-hold. But, at this point, devotion made a stand against luxury, and conquered. The worldliness of eating *hot* dishes was happily eschewed. Cold victuals often require, and so minister to, the gracious feelings, if partaken of with patience and an uncomplaining spirit.

In the early day, fasting was the very spirit of abstinence; then, the spirit of moderation in eating; and finally, the spirit of abundance, making a judicious selection. At first, all intelligent creatures fasted. Then servants began to be excused; then delicate women; and then robustious children, that ran roaring round the house on fast days as if it were an exceeding Sunday; and finally, Fasting was itself the only thing that fasted on Fast-day.

Meantime, while the starved Fast-day, like a consumptive moon, grew pale, and thin, and wasted away, every year dying, and yet clinging tenaciously to life, the well-fed Thanksgiving day, like a new moon, grew bright and round, and lay upon the year's horizon like a joyful pumpkin upon the ridges of a Yankee corn field; the pumpkin! sign and symbol in the calendar of New England of jovial festivity. And, now, Thanksgiving may be seen any year, in the mellow days of November, round and jolly, with all the air of a fat old English Christmas; while in April, amidst blustering winds and pinching frosts, its defrauded and bankrupt brother, very poor and thin, shambles along, wishing it were dead, among millions of hard-hearted people who wish so too. And so Self-gratulation flourishes in New England, while Humiliation loses popularity every year.

Rose Wentworth and Alice Cathcart returned home, after the great labors of summer and autumn, to recruit and to spend the Thanksgiving. Agate Bissell peremptorily refused.

"Why should I go home? I have enough to do, and I love to do it. Nobody can take as good care of my boys as I can. And as for rest, I was never so little tired in my life."

In fact, Agate was living in an undreamed of glory. With such tender duties, so important; with such scope, and so many instruments; the love of activity which had all her life, like a subterranean river, flowed darkly and hidden within, now came to the surface and sparkled in the light without hindrance or bound.

"There can't be any thanksgiving to me like taking care of four hundred men that have been wounded for their country. But then, you girls ought to go. You have fathers and mothers that have a right to you. I have none," said Agate somewhat sadly.

"Well, Agate," said Rose, a little slyly, "you may have others who would like to see you, quite as near as if they were fathers?"

Whereat Agate's eye twinkled just a little, and she bent over to put up the bandages again which had tumbled out of a box.

Rose and Alice meant to slip away without notice; but in some way it was known, and they had to pass the ordeal of gratitude. Next to ingratitude the most painful thing to bear is gratitude. A sensitive nature is glad to know that one is grateful and that one longs to show it. But to stand in the focus of an enthusiastic thanksgiving is awkward enough.

Few can express thanks gracefully, and fewer yet are those who can gracefully receive them. Both Rose and Alice found this out when rough men thanked them for their very lives, and others professed that they had been more than mothers to them, and some craved them to accept a button or some token of their prowess captured in battle. Amidst cheers, and some tears, too, on hard cheeks, the girls got away; and though their faces were homeward and their hearts eager, there was a heavy feeling that they had turned their backs upon that which had taken hold even deeper than Home!

After the natural overflow of gladness at being once more at home had somewhat subsided, Rose was conscious of a dull disquiet, a sense of the emptiness of former pleasure. Common duties and the ordinary flow of village life were tame and flavorless. It seemed to her that people were living for trifles, and wasting the noblest powers upon matters scarcely worth a thought. Indeed she chid herself for wanting natural affection, inasmuch as her own home failed to furnish that deep content which she formerly knew. So long had she been engaged in the profoundest tragedies of heroic life, that the simple duties of peaceful domestic circles palled upon her taste. She grew restless, and longed to return to the exposures, the fatigues, and the sufferings even, of the hospital, the march and the battlefield. There was, too, a strange uneasiness of conscience. Her judgment told her that she had a right to rest and to recreation. Yet she started when persons came in, as if they would reproach her for indolence.

But the winter soon wore away, and in March both Alice and Rose returned to their labors again, and prepared to enter the campaign of Chancellorsville with that glorious army whose only fault was that it was too large for its commander, a noble soldier, within a circle not too large.

Before March had done blustering, but not before the birds had come, our two brave women, glad to depart, though it was from homes as well loved as any for which mortal heart ever yearned, turned their dear faces southward.

Agate Bissell greeted them with a most motherly welcome. She seemed as fresh and unworn as if the winter had been a long vacation.

"Why, Agate," said Rose, "I never saw you look so well! A little pale,—just a little. But I suppose that is because you have been all winter under a roof. Field work will revive your color."

Rose handed her a package of letters, and among them one from Dr. Buell, saying archly, as she saw the color come to Agate's cheek:

"On second thought, I do not know but you have as much color in your cheek as ever."

"Rose, you think that you know a good deal. But I tell you, if you do, then you know more than I do! You may read the letter and welcome." said Agate, extending the open letter to her. It ran:

"NORWOOD, *March* 14, 1863.

"MISS AGATE BISSELL—*Dear Madam:* At Miss Rose's suggestion, I write you a line, lest under the accumulation of labors, and in hours of weariness, you may be in danger of believing yourself forgotten. Truly, every pious and patriotic heart here at home thanks you for your excellent and most praiseworthy labors in behalf of our sick and wounded soldiers. Doubt not that many prayers ascend for you daily, mine among the number. The Lord is preparing you, it may be, for future important labors, in a school where so much of patience and of wisdom are required, and whatever may be the divine counsels which respect the future, may He overrule all to his own honor and glory.

"The meetings are well attended. A gracious spirit is found in the female prayer-meeting. Polly Marble is dead, and the deacon is very much afflicted. She was very faithful to him, and her last breath was spent in exhorting him, in an edifying manner. It's a great loss, indeed, to him, and to all of us, but a gain to her.

"There has been an interest in the church this winter, and several persons give pleasing evidence of a saving change. May they run well! All your friends will rejoice when your duties shall allow you to return home, and none more than your friend and affectionate pastor, JEDEDIAH BUELL."

The campaign of Chancellorsville opened in May, 1863. General Barton Cathcart—for he had been advanced in rank,—learning of his sister's presence, sought her out immediately after the withdrawal of his brigade to the north side of the Rapidan. Rose Wentworth was engaged in the hospital transport service, and spent most of her time, for weeks, upon the steamboats that conveyed the wounded from the depots along the Potomac to Washington. Barton failed to see her. But Agate Bissell and his sister Alice, as soon as the army settled again in its former camps he found. The movements of the army to the west and north soon separated them again, nor did they approach each other afterwards till the great battle of GETTYSBURG, toward which we will now wend our way.

Early in June, 1863, Lee began, with great skill of secrecy, to transfer the bulk of his army from before Hooker's line to the Shenandoah valley, preparatory to a sudden invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania, by which masterly movement he had good reason to hope that the war would be removed from Virginia, which had already suffered incredible ills, as the chief battle-ground, to Pennsylvania, where an army might be easily sustained; and, if Hooker's army were defeated, Baltimore and Philadelphia would become prizes. Washington, cut off from the north, must then fall; and not far off from such an event must come peace, with the recognition of Southern independence.

Nor can one now, after the event, standing in General Lee's place, and reasoning upon the facts as they then appeared, and as we now know them to have actually been, charge him with unsobriety of expectation. There were good and sound military reasons for expecting success, and success would in all likelihood have been decisive of the results of the war.

After the battle of Chancellorsville, in May, the army under Lee had, in numbers, equipment, but above all in the confidence of its own irresistibleness, reached the highest point of its history. It certainly had cause for self-confidence.

It had resisted the whole power of the Union for two years, with but one grand defeat, while it wrote upon its banners the great victories of the Seven Days of the Peninsula, of Fredericksburg, of Second Bull's Run, and of Chancellorsville.

One general only had that army had, or desired, after it was fairly organized. Both the North and the South bore witness to his ability—the South by an enthusiastic admiration and confidence; the North by four times changing the general of the Army of the Potomac opposed to him.

On the third year of the war, with an army invincible thus far, and a commander whose name had gone out into all the world, it is not strange that they should be resolved to transfer the field of battle from Virginia, which was but one great mountain-clad fort, long enough besieged and seared with fire, and let the northern fields take their turn of blasting, blood and flame!

With their faces aglow with the victory of Chancellorsville, Lee's army skilfully glided past Hooker, entered the valley of the Shenandoah, drove out or consumed the loyal forces, and, in the last days of June, burst into the Cumberland valley, in Pennsylvania. Their cavalry, like the biting scud of a storm, spread instantly, and scoured all the defenceless region to the banks of the Susquehanna. With promptness and admirable decision, Lee stretched out Ewell's corps and dividing it, as with his right hand, seized York, thus threatening Baltimore and Washington; with his left hand he seized Carlisle, aiming at Harrisburg and Philadelphia; while his main body lay at Chambersburg, near the head of the valley of the Cumberland.

Then it was that he learned that Hooker, moving in pursuit, had crossed the Potomac, concentrated at Frederick, with his face as though determined to strike across the foot of the Cumberland valley and cut off his line of communication with Virginia. To compel Hooker to let this enterprise alone, Lee drew back his advanced corps from York to Carlisle, with orders to concentrate with the centre, which poured through a pass in the South Mountain, upon Gettysburg, a small village in the eastern skirts of the mountain range; and so, Lee said, in effect, If you touch my line of communication I will seize Washington.

But, before this movement was known, or even half-way developed, Hooker retired from command, and the fifth commander in order came to the head of the Army of the Potomac. Ignorant of Lee's purposes, and knowing in general only that he was advancing to the centre of Pennsylvania, Meade, abandoning Hooker's plan, spread his army along the eastern side of the South Mountain, parallel to Lee's line, determined to follow him to the Susquehanna and bring him to battle.

But two marches had Meade made, bringing his army up nearly abreast of Gettysburg, somewhat to the east and southeast of it, when he had reason to believe that Lee was concentrating on the east of South Mountain. Meade's left wing, three corps, under Reynolds, advanced upon Gettysburg to discover the enemy, as well as to hide the operations of the centre and right wing. While Buford was pricking and probing the country with his cavalry, on the 29th of June, he rode into Gettysburg, and was there stumbled upon the next day, June 30, by the advanced guard of the Southern army. Thus the two armies approached each other, big with terrific battle, as unconscious of the imminent shock as are two summer clouds, charged with storms, and moving upon opposite winds silently toward each other.

Three days of battle there were;—one on the outlying hills beyond the town, and two along the slopes and rocky crests south and east of Gettysburg;—three days, on which the Southern army rolled in and broke upon the rocky ridges of the North, as spring tides moving with the power of the ocean behind them beat high and fierce upon a rocky coast, and retreat again to the dark caves of the sea!

This was a battle between the men of the tropics and the men of the temperate zones. It was to be decided whether the gods of the valleys or the gods of the hills were the mightier. The fat Southern soils, tilled by enforced labor, made war on the rocks of the North, where men by hard labor had learned patience and skill. Two battles there were waged in one. Principles were contending in the air, while men were fighting on the ground. And when on the night of the fourth of July, the army of the South, sullenly and in the dark, drew back from the farms of Pennsylvania and retreated southward, it was not alone the defeat of the army, but far more of the political economy, the genius of government, and the evil spirit of a perverted religion, that had inspired the conflict and given moral significance to the Rebellion.

But we have overrun our story, or, rather, gone before to prepare a way for the maiden's feet to tread.

CHAPTER L.

ON THE MARCH.

A GREAT excitement filled Washington when it was known that Lee had entered Pennsylvania. The darkness which had hung painfully over his movements was cleared away. The sweep of Jenkins' cavalry, the rapid movement of Ewell upon the Susquehanna, the opening of the rebel general's plans with such decision as indicated his sense of power and confidence of victory, were enough to account for excitement. But an invasion was something new. The intrusion of Lee the year before into Maryland scarcely punctured the rind of the Free States. But now it was reaching at the core. Such an uproar was never known among the farmers of Pennsylvania. The old Dutch settlers at last experienced a thrill! Three years had they probably been in doubt whether hostilities had broken out or not. They were conservative men. They would not be carried away with rumors. Newspapers they rarely saw, and then only to doubt them. But the cavalry raids, the sweeping up of their stock, the sudden departure of horses from the plough and wagon, and the farewell cackles of expiring hens, were things to be believed. In fine, eighty thousand men, with Lee at their head, had power to drive a new idea into the heads of the Pennsylvania Dutch around Gettysburg. But once in, that idea of war wrought mightily. They raised a clamor that filled the State. Like Münchausen's horn, which, when hung near the fire, played all the tunes which had been frozen up in it through the winter, so all those hopes and fears, doubts and enthusiams, which play out of common people's lives, but freeze up in the Dutch mind of Southern Pennsylvania, were now thawed out by the fire of war into clamorous racket, which went echoing through the cities of the country as if the Last Day had indeed come!

All manner of wild rumors filled Baltimore and Washington. As soon as Hooker's army had crossed the Potomac, it was known to the Sanitary Commission that a great battle must soon be fought Energetic measures were taken to prepare succor for the wounded.

Wagons were loaded with clothing, food, cordials, blankets, tents, and with all those numberless delicacies often so much better to the sick and wounded than medicine. Nurses and ladies were summoned. It behoved the Sanitary Commission to be on the ground as soon as a blow was struck. This was its golden opportunity. Its mission was not to supersede the Medical Department of the army, but, being more lithe and nimble, to anticipate the regular unfolding of organized succor; to meet exigencies not otherwise provided for; to fill up gaps and intervals, and to perform, by the presence of women, as noble as ever ministered in temple or sanctuary, those offices of consolation and Christian instruction to the dying, or desperately wounded, which transcended the functions of the Medical Department.

Signs multiplied of urgent danger and impetuous haste. The great hour of Destiny was advancing. The Departments of Government, the city of Washington and the whole region round about were like a boiling caldron. As if more fuel was needed, Stuart and his large body of cavalry sought to regain Lee's army, and, crossing the Potomac at Seneca Creek, swept up through Maryland, flirting their wings in the face of Washington and Baltimore as they passed, and stirring up all the region as if they had been flying dragons.

No wonder, when, on the 28th of June, the sentinels and citizens saw mounted men looking right into the city of Washington, and then scuds of cavalry whirling around Baltimore, that troops were on foot, citizens armed and hastily rushed to the lines of defence, and that a thousand rumors, mixing truth and the fictions of fear, filled the air.

Hiram Beers started forth with a line of eight wagons, to overtake the army. Others were speedily to follow, while the railroads were to be employed, so soon as the battle-field was determined, for the bulk of transportation. He took the Rockville road, aiming at Frederick, where, in a conveyance of their own, Agate Bissell was to meet him, with Rose and Alice. At Rockville he was warned to turn back —the enemy filled the country. A train had just been seized and burnt.

"That's lucky for me," said Hiram. "You don't see a cannon ball go through the same hole twice. I guess the enemy hasn't made up his mind to stop, yet a while, and if he's gobbled up trains ahead of me, it stands to reason that he'll be gone afore I git there."

"There's no tellin', stranger," said the old man who was informing him, "how many there is of 'em. I hearn tell that the country's full on 'em. Jake Armistead has been out, you know, in the rebel army, though he's home now, and Union too, till his wounds get well, and *he* sez, there must be nigh about ten thousand, and that they cover the hull country thick as pigeons in acorn time. I reckon, stranger, that they'd like to take a look at your wagons."

Hiram pushed his hat up a trifle, on his forehead, and drawing a knife out of his pocket, as if utterly at ease, said, as he began slowly and smoothly to curl the shavings off the edge of a white pine stick:

"Thank'ee, sir. I guess they've got something else to look after by this time. Why, sir, there's twenty thousand troopers gone up after 'em from Washington, and Hooker, he's got a hundred thousand men at Frederick, and there's a hundred thousand more in Washington and Baltimore, and more comin' from the North every hour."

"More comin'?"

"More? Why, you hain't begun to see yet. Fact is, the North is just wakin' up. We hain't done nothin' yet but cut out the work. There's nobody gone hardly. You wouldn't think there was a man missin'. But, now we see what's to do we are goin' to send down a million men, right off."

There had collected, by this time, quite a crowd around Hiram's teams, and he was improving the time while his horses ate oats to make a salutary impression on the Maryland mind.

An ex-rebel soldier seemed somewhat better informed:

"Lee has got York, and Carlisle, and, in a day or two, he'll have Harrisburg, and then look out for fun!"

Hiram looked at him fixedly, as one who is in doubt whether he will impart a secret:

"Well, I guess it won't do no hurt to tell out now. But our folks jest left Carlisle on purpose to tempt 'em—like toasted cheese in a trap; if Lee's nibblin', you may depend on't, he'll find that he's caught."

"Ah old Yank, you can't come that over me. Lee's used to nibblin' Yankee cheese. He ate some at Fredericksburg, and he's jest been nibblin' a pretty large cheese at Chancellorsville, and, by the time you'll get there, I guess you'll find the old rat has gnawed his way out."

Nothing daunted by the laugh, Hiram, with a look of undisturbed confidence, just a little touched with pity for their ignorance, walked away toward his wagons.

"Do you really think," said one of his drivers, in an anxious tone, "that it's safe to go on?"

"Safe? what are you 'feard of? Lee is jest like a walnut in a nut-cracker. They'll smash him, sure."

"I shouldn't care about bein' caught. A prisoner on foot, trottin' along with cavalry, don't feel as comfortable as if he was to hum!"

"Is that so?" said Hiram, very soberly.

"Wal, it is. I tell ye—mebbe you hain't tried it? I've travelled ye see, and don't want to do it any more. The fust time—Mosby's men, they tuck me. Wal, one on 'em took a fancy to my cap, and swopped. I got something to boot though," said the driver, beginning to scratch his head, "every time I think of that old felt hat that he guv' me, somehow I feel like scratchin'. Another man, he wanted my shoes, and I lent 'em to him. They never cum back. Then one of the officers took a likin' to my coat; and, at last, a darned rascal made me get out of my britches. In less than five minutes I didn't know myself, and kept lookin' 'round to see where I was. But I found out afore they'd done with me."

"Wal," said Hiram, "drive on; I don't expect any body to catch me."

"Nobody expects to be caught. You see, a feller is goin' along, drivin' his horses and chawin' his tobacker, thinkin' about the home folks, touchin' up fust one horse and then another, when—right ahead—fizz! bang! whang! bang! and then, behind in the line, you hear it again—whang! bang!—and a hundred horsemen whirl in on you, cut out your wagons, and, afore the soldiers can get up, twenty wagons are drivin' off like mad, and rebel soldiers a-prickin' the mules with bayonets, and afore you fairly know which eend you stand on, they're all in the mountains and you're dividin' your clothes with the ragamuffins."

Hiram laughed at the descriptive misery, but ordered forward the teams.

"I've no idea of lettin' them Southern fellers have the handlin of these goods. Pretty business for our folks to set up nights to knit stockins, and then have the rebels put 'em on to fight our boys with! They didn't have an apple-parin' at our town to make apple-sarse for Lee's army, I guess! Golly! what would Marm Marble say if she should hear that the rebs had got her dried apples and punkins? No, no; they shan't poke their nasty fingers into my sweetmeats. I didn't fetch these nice liquors for their accommodation. Liquor is a good thing in its place. But, as a general thing, I'm of opinion that the very worst place you can put good liquors into is a feller's stomach! If a feller's been tapped with a bullet, that may make a difference. But I don't believe the Lord ever made that hole in a man's face to pour liquor through."

"Wal," said one of his men, "then there's been an amazin oversight somewhere. There's been a sight of liquor got through the wrong place, then!"

Hiram got safely to Frederick, and met there the agents and ladies of the Commission. But Meade had been gone a day. The order then was to follow up the army and to keep within easy reach of it.

The next morning the whole party were on the road. Hiram expressed himself on the subject of armies:

"If there ever was any thing that beat all creation in bein' expensive, it's an army. It runs off property as fast as a river does water. It's waste, waste, waste! Enough is trod under foot every day to feed a town, and when they're marchin', they're wuss than buffaloes in a corn-field. But the hind end of an army is about the most disagreeable place that I know on. The stragglers, and traders, and rascals, strain through, and leave a welt of dirt for miles and miles behind. I couldn't sleep a wink last night. Frederick was chuck-full of roarin', drinkin' fellers, fightin' and yellin'. I think the hind-end of an army is more dangerous than its fore-end. It's like Gran'ther Morse's old musket, that would tear you to pieces if you were before it, and kick you to pieces if you stood behind it. The only place where it was safe was hangin' up over the fire-place to hum. An army is a very dangerous thing, anyhow, and awful extravagant. I s'pose we must fight it through now, though. Don't see no other way. But if ever this war's over, I'm goin' to jine an Everlastin' Peace Society."

As the party journeyed on, at every mile evidences multiplied that the army was not far away. Stragglers abounded. The main army seemed to have done no damage. One would not, except for the beaten roads, and some little invasion of fields, the breaking here and there of a cherry branch, whose luscious fruit tempted its own fate, have dreamed that eighty thousand men had passed; but, after the army came the herd of stragglers. They robbed houses, stole horses from the stables, and in drunken knots caroused or threatened those who were weak.

Rose looked out upon the wondrous brightness of those June days—no, it was the first of July—marvelling in her thoughts how the enginery of death could be moving through all this peace and beauty to its dreaded work. The sky was deep. Drifting through it in profound leisure—drifting so slowly and gently that they hardly seemed to move, were soft and small clouds. So long had Rose now been trained in scenes of pain and terror that her heart knew its own courage; and though there was in the very air, and through all its brightness, a certain sadness, as if already she felt the horrors of that distant battle, whose sounds, though it was already begun, were not heard, Rose's thoughts floated peacefully as those flecks of brilliant cloud, dazzling white, mixed with shades and shadows.

"Rootless and stemless, ye grow, O clouds! The winds that roar upon forests shake no sounds out of your silent forms. Without seed or sowing, ye grow. Ye wither without frost, or the axe, and pass away in an hour. Ye grow alike in winter as in summer, and shake down from your boughs drops or flakes in both seasons. Yet no man may plant you, nor till you, nor play husbandry in the realm where ye dwell."

"I s'pose you're thinkin', Miss Rose," said Hiram, "that it's time to have something to eat. Well, I shouldn't wonder if 'twas."

"Yes, Hiram, I was thinking of harvests, but not exactly such as could be eaten."

"Well, I'll see what can be done. The fact is, the soldiers are yonder, fillin' all the road, and I don't b'lieve we can git along much further. You wait a bit, and I'll go and see.'

In a moment Rose was dreaming again, with her face turned toward the clouds.

"Out of such stillness of white come storms! Ye are the mothers of thunder! Hidden there is the lightning! Now ye are palaces of silence, but to-morrow all the sounds of storm shall resound among you! And so out of men's loving hearts comes hatred, and out of men's consciences comes war, and all that makes peace beautiful changes in battle to mighty wrath, to awful cruelty, to remorseless slaughter. Even now—who knows?—while I look upon this serene heaven, Barton, perhaps, is in the heat of fight; it may be he lies wounded, or dying, because no one binds up his wounds——"

"What on earth's the matter, Miss Rose—are ye cryin'?" said Hiram, and without waiting for an answer he went on—"It's no time for cryin' now—the battle is goin' on. We've heerd from Gettysburg—some say it's all on our side, and some say t'other way, and nobody knows any thing about it. But the headquarters is movin', and the whole army is goin' ahead. If you mean to get there to-night we must be stirrin', I can tell ye."

Rose consulted with the agents of the Commission in charge of the company, and it was considered useless to attempt to force their way along the roads by which the army was moving, already choked up with artillery, supply trains, and the troops. In their perplexity Hiram started out to explore. He soon returned. With him came also a military man of distinguished bearing. A staff officer rode by his side, and a colored man stood at a little distance grinning and looking at Rose in the most extraordinary manner.

An outcry from Alice was Barton Cathcart's introduction. She sprung out of the carriage and threw herself into his arms with impassioned fondness. He looked down upon his sister with a look of the proudest love. For a moment the blood left Rose's cheek, but then came again with a rebound.

"Oh! Barton," said Alice, "to see you here, in this strange place, is like a breath from home. But there is Rose coming to you."

Rose's first impulse was not to intrude upon him. Her next and better thought was, "It is Barton, my childhood friend," and in a moment every other thought was gone, and with a gladness scarcely less demonstrative than Alice's, Rose reached both her hands to Barton. But he was more embarrassed. Rose's warmth of manner seemed to touch him. He had prepared for a more formal meeting.

"This is very kind, Miss Wentworth."

"No, no, Barton—I am not Miss Wentworth—to you—I am Rose; the same names which we used in childhood, if you please."

A throng of memories crowded his mind. His heart was like a vortex in which strong feelings whirled. He would have spoken, but seemed like one who hesitates which of many things to say first. He fixed upon Rose a look so full of inquiry, and yet so imploring and hungry, a look full of eagerness and helplessness, that Rose to her dying day never forgot it. Words are of the flesh, opaque. Looks are of the spirit, luminous.

The pause was embarrassing. Rose first plucked up her voice and said:

"Barton, we are going with you. Can we get along in time on this route, or shall we be delayed? The roads are choked up with the army."

"You had better keep with my Division. We are pushing on with all our might. The day has gone wrong, and we must all be up to-night."

There was time but for a few words, hurried and almost incoherent. In a moment Barton was gone. It was a dream! They awake to see him disappear among the throngs beyond!

It was late before they reached the vicinity of Gettysburg. All the way Barton's look dwelt with Rose. The most emphatic revelations of the soul are made through glances of the eye. By the looks only can the soul signify complex experiences—hope, fear, yearning, love, sad and sorrowful—and all in an instant. These revelations of the soul's inmost life will not be incarnated in the rude materials of common language. But a look is almost as immaterial as a thought. A glance is a fit incarnation of a thing so tender as love. Not what they say do we remember of absent friends; but, how they looked while saying it. We live upon the meaning of the expressions of the face more than of the tongue. The silences which speech carries along with it are often more emphatic than the words.

By a side road, Hiram had got his party out from the tangle of the Taneytown road, and was making his way over to the Baltimore turnpike. Although the moon was of some slight help, yet, by eight o'clock, the jaded horses and scarcely less jaded company were glad to find a farm-house where they might sleep. By the faint moonlight Hiram descried a palace of a barn near at hand.

"Aha!" said Hiram, "there is a Dutch barn. Now we shall stumble over the hovel pretty soon."

"Why, what do you mean?" said Agate.

"I mean," replied Hiram, "that them Pennsylvania Dutch think more of their horses than they do of themselves. A feller travellin' round here awhile almost wishes he was a horse. The houses are mean; the barns are magnificent."

Hiram, for once, had to take back his words, for they approached a large and comely farm-house, which would have done no discredit to the elm homes of New England. Every thing about it was still. Though it was not yet nine o'clock, not a light was burning.

"I guess," said Hiram, "that they're gone out to see the sights. 'Tain't every day that a Dutchman sees an army. I guess they think the day of judgment is come. They will if there's much fightin' to-morrow."

He was again mistaken. The family were abed and soundly asleep. A rap at the door brought the owner out of bed, and his honest face to the door.

"Can we git leave to stay here to-night?" said Hiram.

"'Why, of course you can. Come right in! Women?—why, women?—out this time o' night? That's too bad. Mary! Mary, I say!"

By this time his good wife Mary came forth, the smiles endeavoring to chase the sleepiness off from her face, as she was tying a string here, or buttoning there, or hooking up her dress behind.

"Seems to me your abed early, uncle, aren't ye?" said Hiram.

"Wal—pretty. But we go to bed early, we get up early too."

"Liked to have got up this time 'fore you got to bed," said Hiram, winking.

"Yes, yes, yes," said the honest old farmer, with an unmeaning laugh.

"Don't you know the army's all round you?"

"Yes; but they don't touch nuthin'. They're welcome to't if they do."

"How far is it to town?"

"Wal—'bout three miles; three and a half—say four miles. Depends a little on which way you go."

After Hiram had seen to the horses, he followed the sounds, and soon came upon the wagon trains parked for the night. The rumbling of artillery still was heard in the roads near by. Reserve artillery and ammunition trains had turned into fields on either side of the road. Soldiers were still crowding onward. They moved silently, as men who were tired with long and rapid marching.

He came across a part of the cavalry that had that morning been engaged, and picked up some scraps of the fight as they had seen it. He inquired for the hospitals, toward which, in the morning, he was to go. An officer, with his head bandaged, gave him the information.

Buford's Cavalry and Wadsworth's Division of Reynolds' corps had held in check the heads of Hill and Longstreet's corps, coming from Chambersburgh, and gained some advantage. But about noon Ewell's corps coming in on the Union right, brought great disaster and even rout upon them. The whole left wing had barely saved itself, but now was holding the high ground south and east of Gettysburg. This was the first day's fight. Hiram returned to the house, and after a generous supper the party were glad to retire. The day had been fatiguing enough. The morrow would try them yet more.

CHAPTER LI.

GETTYSBURG.

Long before sunrise on the Wednesday morning of the second of July, our party were astir. Early as they were, the good housewife was before them, and a bountiful breakfast awaited them. After the farmer's wife had learned from Agate the business which took such beautiful ladies, as Rose and Alice seemed to her eyes, to the battle-field, she could not do enough for them; and as they parted from her, the good old farmer said to them:

"We live some ways from Gettysburg; but if any of your friends are wounded, or you want to send any body else here, it's a quiet place, and we've got enough, and we'll take the best care we can of them. So, remember, if you can't do any better, won't you?"

Thanking them heartily for their kindness, which was in marked contrast with the brutal demeanor of the Dutch farmers around Gettysburg on those awful days, they were leaving, when, having talked a moment with his wife, he came back and said:

"I reckon I'd better go 'long with you a spell. I know some crooks and turns that may better your road. By what my men say, the main roads have been full all night, and soldiers are still crowdin' up to the front. I expect there will be powerful fightin' to-day, and I'll go up. Maybe I can help the wounded folks, if I don't fight myself. That ain't my trade."

Sure enough, the roads were blocked; but their honest farmer friend, by lanes, and through cart roads in the wood, and by crossing sown fields, brought them, at last, to the rear of that long line of rocky hills, whose crest and westward slope was already crowded with soldiers.

Not a syllable of disrespect did they receive from soldiers or camp followers. In many instances cheers were raised for them, and "God bless you" was showered upon them by regiments and brigades who had seen them on other battle-fields. Indeed, there were few regiments in the army of the Potomac where Agate Bissell's name was not known and honored. At certain points, where bodies of soldiers were at rest, the men flocked around them, and shook hands with them as old friends.

"What's all that?" said a soldier of the — Pennsylvania to one of his comrades, who saw the stir and heard some cheering around their carriage.

"What is it? Why, it's the old one with her two doves. There ain't many boys in this regiment that don't know Mother Bissell and the Rose of Norwood!"

With that a bright, lithe young fellow sprung toward the party with all the eagerness of a child. But, as he came up and was not recognized, he almost sulked like a pouting boy:

"Why, don't you know me, Aunty Bissell? I'm your Willie?"

Agate turned upon him a quick look.

"Take off your cap! Why, Willie Woolsy! I never should have known you!"

And then, patting his head and smiling proudly on him, she said:

"Why, Willie, how you have improved! how fat and rosy you are! I never should imagine that you were that poor, pale boy that I snatched from the very hands of death, I do believe!"

And so, one by one, scores of men came in for a word, whom these women had succored on the battle-field, or nursed in the hospitals, or transported on steamers on the Potomac to Washington, or fed and clothed at various times and different places. This did not seem like the greetings of a field of carnage; it was more like a home-greeting.

The forenoon wore rapidly away. The hospital camps were selected. The Sanitary Commission had been able to secure no transportation on the railroad; and fortunate it was that—thanks to Hiram Beers' enterprise—so many wagons had been got through and so large a store of articles was on hand.

All through the forenoon, the distant sound of skirmish-firing was faintly heard. It rose and rippled on the air, and died away Again, from another quarter, it pattered for a half hour, and gradually died out like an expiring drum-beat. Noon came; and no battle. All was suspense. No one that they could reach could give the information. Would Lee retreat? or was not Meade willing to give battle?

The afternoon wore on. The wounded of the day before were in Gettysburg or beyond, or, if brought behind the Northern lines, it was three miles to the north of the position chosen by the Commission for the first station.

It was after two o'clock. They were resting. Suddenly the great hulking body of Pete Sawmill rose up before them; and Pete, gurgling and laughing, seemed overjoyed to see his old friends.

"Well done! as sure as soot," said Agate, "here's our Pete! I'm as glad to see your homely black face, Pete, as if you was as white as snow!"

Pete reached out his great hand, to each of them, giving to each of them in turn one down motion that seemed likely to take their arms out of the socket, and giggling and laughing, in a way more silly than usual. He sidled up to Rose, with the most foolish look of affection, and began to move his hands in the air, as if he was taking up a child, or patting and playing with some invisible dog

"Why, you poor old soul," said Agate, "we are all as glad to see you, Pete, as if you belonged to us."

"He, he, he! I guess I do. I don't b'long to nobody else, except the gin'ral."

"Where is Barton?" said Alice and Rose almost in the sam breath.

"You see them woody hummocks yonder?"

"Yes."

"Well, the gineral he's along beyond them, furder up, up toward that way, and a leetle over."

This very luminous description was given with a serious, solemn air, for Pete's heart in every battle was much moved at the danger into which Barton Cathcart *would* throw himself.

"He's allers runnin' to find it and fetch it. He might jest as well wait. Ye see, danger will come itself when they're fightin such allfired battles."

"Pete," said Rose, "do you think we could see Barton's position if we were to go on to that hill?"

"Sartain; I'll take you." Pete seemed as if he were literally about to take Rose as in the old days, when she rode upon his shoulder.

Rose laughed and dashed past him nimbly, on her way to the edge of Little Round Top. As she ascended the ridge the scene began to open upon her.

On reaching the summit, the view was obstructed by the fringe of woods through which the road passed. But by climbing a little to the south of the road, Rose obtained a clear view of the ridge on whose slopes lay the Northern army, extending from where she stood two miles north toward Gettysburg, which, from this point, was tucked up so close to the northern head of the ridge that only the western skirts of the village could be seen, fringing out into the valley. A mile and more across from where she stood looking west, was a range of low and rounded hills, forest-clad in spots, or dotted with orchards. On the southern half of the line they were so carved out by the wear of waters for ages, that they seemed like huge beads half buried in the ground; but further north, and over against Gettysburg, the terrace was less scarped and ran with an easier slope. Above and beyond these hills, to the westward, rose others, and wide strips of forest, and ten miles away the blue mass of the South Mountains banked up against the horizon.

Between the two low-lying ridges on which the armies lay was a mile-wide valley, its southern half much filled up with rolling hills, and cut into with dells and tangles of wood and rock. The upper half, or that nearest Gettysburg, was scooped out and smoother. Along the line of swells between these two sorts of valley had been placed the left wing of Meade's army, forming an angle of about 45 degrees with the ridge on which the rest of the army lay.

To crush this leg thrust out from the body, as it were, and to seize the lower part of the ridge which the left should have occupied, was Lee's whole aim in the second day's battle. For four hours the fight here raged with excessive violence. The best troops of both armies were in the struggle. Neither before or since has there been more thorough fighting, of all arms, with heroic tenacity and an indomitable will that did not know how to let go. And when darkness ended the conflict, the Northern troops, though on the whole worsted, had been only pushed back to their true position along the ridge, with the natural fortresses of Great Round Top and Little Round Top inexpugnably guarding the left of their line. But this is in anticipation.

Pete had followed Rose with more than usual gravity. He seemed like an uneasy hound that smells something in the distance that disquiets him. It is true that Pete had no conception of the construction of an army, nor is it probable that he could have been made to understand strategy, or tactics, in any proper and scientific way of stating them. But Pete was an innate hunter. He had all the intuitions and inspirations, which belong to the venatorial art. In their ground forms these are not far from the science of warfare.

What are two armies but two huge animals that are hunting each other?—each, concealing its own movements and spying out the other's—creeping, watching, feigning, waiting for some unguarded moment, or indefensible posture, to spring with concentrated strength and loud roar upon the other! In a vague and rude way Pete felt some such battle instinct. He watched the hills opposite.

"There they are!"

"Who?"

"Why the Rebs—don't you see 'em?"

"Where do you mean?" said Rose, shading her eyes with her hand.

"Right over in the edge of them woods—don't you see the light flash? That's the sun shinin' on their guns. There 'tis ag'in! Them woods is jest full. Don't you see, clear away there, on the left—them lines like? that's them too. I don't like it."

"Well, Pete, are not our soldiers there too?"

"Don't you see? there's our boys right across yonder. Them d—— rebels!" said Pete, waxing irreverently warm, "will be creepin' round behind 'em. I don't like it! I don't like it!"

And then Pete, uneasily, like a hound, again changed his position, and, pointing his muzzle out toward the scene of impending conflict, looked intently upon the fields.

"Pete, what ought they to do?" said Rose innocently, to her humble companion, and with as much faith in his judgment as if he were some black Napoleon.

"I dun know. I expect they better come back here."

The scuds of white cloud that held their indolent course through the air early in the morning were now all gone away, and had left the heavens unscarred and unfurrowed. The sun now, half way down from the meridian, shot back floods of light along the path it had just travelled, but could not change its blue. Far up, the vault was paled a little, but blue it was—clear, tender blue. But, nearer the ground and along the horizon, the ruddy sunlight flooded all things with a peculiar golden hue. The air seemed rich, the earth dreamy, and the landscape that lay before Rose's eye seemed to her imagination as if in a tranquil meditation. The distant jets of white smoke, the faint reports of sharpshooters' rifles, or occasional ripples of skirmishers' firing seemed only like the plashing of a tranquil sea upon the shore—sound just enough to make stillness palpable. Every thing conspired to fill Rose with imaginations contrasting with the impending scenes. A wood-thrush not far from her, in a solitary clump of trees, was singing in a plaintive way to an answering thrush beyond. An oriole flew into a near tree, and sang shrill as a clarionet. Flowers were thick among the stones. A bush of sassafras stood just at her hand, and she was almost unconsciously breaking off the tender and fragrant tips to refresh her mouth.

Rose had risen into that state of imagination in which outward things begin to take on the colors of one's own thoughts, and to stand dressed in human feelings. The whole heavens above her head said to her, "There is no war in me!" the whole valley answered, "It is peace with me!" the woods about her—the fragrant smell of pine and spicy bushes,—the birds singing, and squirrels running nimbly across her path or jerking their tails on the safe edges of rocks,—all were so many tokens of peace!

Suddenly, right over against her, came a peal of thunder! Up rose a curling wreath of smoke. Quickly through it flashed fierce forks of flame; loud and earth-shaking roars came like the rolls of surf upon the shore, in quick succession. The battle had begun! It opened with no spattering shots, bringing out gradually growing volleys. It struck a deep note of thunder at first, and then kept to that awful pitch through four murderous hours!

Rose was fixed and fascinated. She could not withdraw her eyes from that which she dreaded to see. Lines of men came forth from the woods. They were met with sheeted flame, and withered and shrunk back. They were but the first line. Right on, behind them, came Longstreet's masses, that were not to be daunted—fire-proved, annealed in scores of battles! Little could Rose see but the general aspect. The loyal lines bore up stoutly and well. They were pushed and bent; but, like a trusty bow, sprung back again. The conflict became many-sided. Far onward, to the left of the Union lines, emerged the Confederate troops. New batteries seemed to spring up every where; and battle, like forks of flame in a burning town, kindling wherever a spark fell, flashed forth, from point to point, on every swell of land—in the groves—through wheat fields—but, more than all, right over against her, where the heaven was ablaze with artillery, and irresistible masses of Confederate soldiers broke down Sickles' centre and drove back his men from Sherfy's peach-orchard. For an hour, which seemed an age, she gazed. Troops were hastening from Hancock and from Slocum, drawn from the centre and right, to brace up the broken lines. The fight was creeping up from below to the very hill where she stood.

A division of Northern troops was passing the very road on which she had come. Suddenly a brigade was swung off from it, and began to ascend Little Round Top. She hasted down. It was a new sight that she had beheld.

She was used to every form of wounds in men brought off from the field. She had even been along the edge of fights, but it was when the combats raged in muffling woods and thickets. She had never stood where the whole field lay open, where the two armies stretched out their masses in visible opposition and the whole work of destruction could be seen. She turned away, and hastened by the road which, running from the very ground of conflict, hugged Little Round Top where she had been standing; and moved toward the hospital ground of the corps. Within a half hour, men began to come over the ridge wounded, but yet able to get out of the battle. Their numbers increased.

Who shall describe the roar of battle? If one will know the mechanism and anatomy of battle, let him read our American Napier.* If he would see a gorgeous picture of the out-playing of this anatomy, the army charge, the tough and tugging fight, the swirl and hurricane, let him read the brilliant picture-writing of the military Doré of America.† But who shall describe the shadow of the battle? Who shall picture the battle of the hospital? Who shall make into history what passes before the nurses and surgeons!

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* William Swinton. † G. A. Townsend.

The place chosen for the hospital proved to be in the line of fire, and shot and shell soon came down into the very tents, and men who had escaped the battle and cleared its skirts were reached and slain under the surgeon's hands. Another place was chosen. But scarcely had the surgeon's tables been set before whistling balls drove them thence. A third place, nearly astride of Rock Creek, was finally established. The wounded men were now pouring in in fearful numbers. Long lines of men lying on the ground covered the space. No tents were spread. The field hospital was literally but a field. A thousand men in less than an hour and a half! and more streaming in from every direction.

One of the chief needs of wounded men is drink and sustenance. Along the roads by which they came in, the Commission had stationed women and men to supply to the fainting and overspent, as they passed, both nourishment and stimulants. Rose suggested to Agate that the point which she had that afternoon visited would be well situated for a station. Fires were built, hot tea and coffee were kept in full supply, milk punch, wines, and other stimulants were at hand. Many who had climbed thus far, but were exhausted, were here revived by welcome nourishment and shuffled over the hill to the hospital fields.

No sooner had Rose found some active work to do than all her fancies fled, and she settled back into a stern, practical woman, who could look upon wounds, wash and cleanse them, bind them up, cheer the desperately wounded and suffering. She had that happiest of constitutions, one which generated an endless supply of nervous force. With danger she grew calm, and her spirits rose with every perilous exigency. And after days and nights of almost continual service, Rose's body, fed by some inward supply, seemed as fresh and nimble as at the beginning.

"How can you endure so much and hold out so long?" was often asked.

But she could never reply, except to say:

"God gives me strength according to my need."

While Rose was engrossed in supplying the suffering, Hiram appeared from over the hill with the ambulance corps, aiding the wounded, but chiefly engaged in scolding Alice. Rose had, for an hour or two, missed her, and supposed that she had gone back over the hill toward the corps hospital. Instead of that, Alice had quietly ventured forward. Pete carried her effects, and acted as her body-guard; and, lured by some fascination, Alice had ventured down almost upon the edge of battle—outrunning, at last, the boldest of the ambulance corps, encouraging the stretcher-bearers to come on; for, so terrible had been the fire here that the men whose duty it was to succor and bear away the wounded, shrank from the spot. All the stores which Pete could carry were soon consumed, Alice was urging the attendants to more venturesomeness, when the cloud of battle, which had bent and moved outward, suddenly came raining back. A large body of Virginia troops were pressing back our lines. Just then, speeding to the succor of our men, came a division of the Second Corps. It was at the moment of onset that Alice liked to have been swept into the battle, whose bloody spray dashed up to her very feet. Just then some one snatched her by the arm and violently dragged her back.

"What on airth ails ye? Do you *want* to be killed? What sort of a place do you call this for a handsome woman? Come out o' this! Come, come, I say! If this ain't craziness! Never mind, I swow you're a brave girl! By jimminy, I never thought ye had so much in you!"

Just then the spiteful whirl of bullets over their heads renewed Hiram's alarm.

"For God's sake, duck!—duck your head!—get in behind here! What a fool you be. No need on't. What business had you out there?"

"What business had the soldiers there, Hiram?" said Alice, with an intense solemnity.

"It's their business to fight; that's their place."

"It's my business to relieve the wounded men who have been fighting for you and for me."

"Well, you might wait till the men fetched 'em out."

"Hiram, the ambulance men shrunk; their very officers hid I saw them run away. If they had had a brother there, and—and—a brother there—they would have been bolder."

As soon as the danger lulled, Hiram could not refuse his admiration; but the moment shot began to whiz and swirl about her, he fell to scolding Alice again:

"You are a brave girl, anyhow. You ought to have been a soldier. I'm proud of your pluck. Gosh! look out—there some shells and shot—a pretty place for a woman! You want a gardeen over you. I wonder you'd be such a fool. There, then, now we're kind o' behind this swell they won't hit us. I vow, Alice, but you've arnt an epilet to-day."

When Alice saw Rose, she ran to her with a piercing cry: "Oh, oh, oh, Rose! I have seen him. I have seen——!"

"Who? Barton?"

"Yes; but not him. I've seen Heywood. He was rushing in at the head of his men just as Barton came up. Oh, it is dreadful that he is fighting on the rebel side! But, oh, how noble he looked! In that awful whirlpool of war he looked as beautiful as when he sat in our blue-room!"

"But did you see Barton?" said Rose, almost in a terror. "Was he there?"

"Yes—he was rushing right against them. There was an awful crash. Oh, God! I hope Heywood is safe."

Rose, trembling, could scarcely sustain herself; but in a moment her courage came again.

"Alice, think only of Barton. He is your brother! May God preserve those who are defending the right, and send speedy overthrow to those who would destroy their Government!"

Alice only shuddered, but made no reply.

The sun went down, but still the battle raged in the twilight. The left of the Union army, much twisted and bruised, had been shoved back and sadly rent, but, on the whole, had secured a better ground than it had lost; and at eight o'clock the sounds of battle died away on this part of the field; though far away, to the Union right, for a half hour longer the conflict sounded on. But by nine o'clock there was silence. Yes, with more than four thousand men a silence which should not be broken till the last trump!

In the two days, the Union army had lost, in killed, wounded, and missing, nearly twenty thousand men. An equal loss, doubtless, the enemy had sustained. And the third great day was yet to come.

That night, within a circle of five miles diameter there were from both armies together between twenty and thirty thousand wounded men! All farm-houses and barns were filled. Every sheltered field was covered with sufferers Hospital touched hospital. If one had come from the north behind Round Top, the first field hospital would have seemed to contain the wounded of the whole battle; but at every mile, round toward Gettysburg, he would meet another, and another, until he would wonder what could be left of the fighting army which had shaken off from its boughs such another army of withered men! And if the circuit were continued, Gettysburg was full; and, moving over upon the western ridges, where the Confederate army lay, the same mighty trail of blood held on its way. And thus some thirty thousand men, welded together by blood, twined around the great central armies like a gory belt!

The day's fighting was ended. The great toil of mercy was but begun. All night long, men were brought in. Parties scoured the fields hunting for the wounded. Many had crept out of the storm of battle and hidden under fences, or among rocks, or in thickets, and, their strength failing, they could neither come forth, nor make known their presence. Hundreds died whom prompt succor might have saved. When the moon rose and threw its faint light through the moving scuds of cloud, there might have been seen many a stalwart fellow fast fainting unto death. Some clasped in their hands the photograph of wife and children, some of lover; and they were found dead in the morning, the last smile yet lingering on their manly features.

The hospitals enlarged their bounds through all the adjacent fields. The barns in the neighborhood had been taxed for straw; but he was fortunate who had under him any thing but the fresh grass half covered with a blanket.

Hundreds of wounded rebels had been captured, and lay among our men, subject to the same kindness. In the hospital there was peace. Wounds were counted as amicable settlements.

The South, impulsive and unrestrained in the expression of feeling, the North, grave and self-contained, more apt to repress than to show feeling—both carried into battle and into the hospital their peculiarities. The Southern brigades, impetuous and fiery, charged yelling and noisy. The Northern men, sometime hurrahing, yet oftener sternly silent, put their feelings into blows.

The Rebel wounded groaned and cried out. The surgeon's knife let loose their tongues. The Northern wounded lay quiet.

suppressed the groans, fighting their pains as stubbornly and silently as they had fought the rebels.

Yet it was not all sad in the field hospitals. The slightly wounded kept up excellent spirits. After their hurts were dressed, and they were washed and refreshed with food and cordials, they became cheerful and chatty. One might have heard in the early night hundreds of narratives which they were recounting to each other, some sad and some grotesque, and some even gay.

Poor Agate for once quite lost her self-possession, and burst into tears like a child, when, towards sundown, an ambulance brought in that fair Willie, who that morning had so joyously greeted her. A ball cutting across his face, had put out both his eyes. But he was going on in a path where one needs no eyesight!

"Aunty Bissell—*is* this *you?*" he said, in a gentle, plaintive voice.

"Yes, Willie, it is. God bless you, poor child;" and, as Agate stooped to kiss his pale face, her tears dropped upon his cheeks. He could shed no more tears.

"Oh, don't leave me! Stay with me, won't you? Do take hold of my hand. Say something to me. I shall die! Oh, mother, mother, mother! Aunty, don't leave me. Do say something to me!"

Agate bowed down by his side, and while the cannon were yet sounding in the distance, and the air filled with departing souls, she sent up a fervent prayer for the lad.

But others needed care. She hurried from one to another, returning often to speak to Willie, finding him each time weaker, and always whispering either a petition or his mother's name. At the very last, as it grew dark, his mind flickered and seemed working at some childhood remembrance.

"Now I lay me down," said he, in a whisper—"now I lay me—what? mother? now I—now I——."

Then for a little while he only whispered; and when Agate next came to him, all his battles were ended in an eternal victory.

Rose was struck with one man's experience. A bluff and brawny man he looked.

"Wal," said he to some who had been asking him about the conflict, "I remember while we was in Sharfy's peach-orchard, and the firin' was just beginnin', that a sparrow was singin' in a peach-tree. R-r-rip went the rifles. That shet him up. But he began agin. Wh—ang! went the cannon, and for about five minutes they fired and he fired, they fired and he fired back again. But I b'lieve at last they got the upperhand of that sparrow! Queer, wasn't it? I don't remember nothin' else—only it seems as if I had been squirmin' about in a whirlwind of red-hot rain for about a couple of hours."

Hiram reappeared after an hour's absence, about ten o'clock at night. He had been hunting for Pete, he said.

"For Pete?" said Alice. "Why didn't you hunt for Barton?"

"*That's* the *way* to hunt for Barton! If any body'd know where Barton was, Pete would."

"Well, did you find Pete?" said Alice.

"Yes, I did."

"Hiram, why don't you tell me if you saw Barton?"

"Cos you didn't ask me," said Hiram. "Of course I saw him. Do you s'pose I should have been grinnin' about here if Barton was missin'?"

"Has he escaped—and not been hurt?"

"Sound as a nut—pretty well tired though. I guess he's blue too. Sent his love to you, Alice, and good-bye to all the rest, if he never sees you again; would come over, but has jest got word that he may have to move over to the right wing there by daylight to-morrow morning, to drive out a parcel of rebs that's crept in unawares like."

"Thank God, he is safe," said Rose.

Alice seemed lost in thought.

Meanwhile, though greatly tired out, Hiram said he would take a little turn around among the men—which meant to keep on his feet till past midnight, in various helpful offices. It was about midnight when he lay down near a fire, around which sat or lay a score or two of wounded men. He heard them talking of their day's work. A sergeant in the 146th New York was talking:

"I had 'nuff on't too. 'Twas my regiment that was in the brigade that charged in to support Sickles. And we did support him too. And we hadn't more'n time to turn round after that charge before they told us to go at Little Round To and we did go at it, and we took that too. Charged bayonets twice within fifteen minutes. And what was the queerest thing, out of that regiment of 800 men we didn't lose but thirty-three in them two charges. But most o'them was officers. In that charge up Little Round Top there happened to be one platoon of rebel sharpshooters in the place, and jest in them two or three minits they picked off our colonel, our leftenant-colonel, three cap'ns—the cap'n o' my comp'ny 'n both leftenants, 'n I do' no how many more. I found myself in command o' that comp'ny pretty sudden.

"Well, after the hottest o' that fightin' was over, I lay down behind a rock and went to sleep; told my second-sargeant to wake me up if there was any thing. Well, pretty soon somebody came 'n waked me up, 'n said Gen. Warren wanted to see me.

"You see, where we was was jest before brigade-headquarters; and, right on top of the position, there was a great big high rock that had a view all over the whole field. 'Way down in front o' that, there was a kind of a valley like, all full o' rough ground. There was one place in it they called the Devil's Den. 'Twan't nothin' but rocks—a reg'lar nest on 'em—big boulders standin' up endways, ledges, and all sorts o' things. Now a lot o' rebel sharpshooters they'd got into them rocks, and they was awaitin'. There couldn't a hat 'a ben showed on top o' that rock on Little Round Top 'thout it had a ball slap through it, and them generals they wanted to git up on there 'n reconnoitre.

"So I went up in the tent. Warren he knowd me; I'd bin under him before, in the old Fifth New York. And there was Gen. Kilpatrick, and Gen. Pleasonton, and Gen. This, and That, and so on. So Warren he says to me, 'Leftenant, can't you take some skirmishers, and go down in there, and clean out them sharpshooters?' Well, that was a command, you know; jest as much as if he'd said I *must* go and do it. So I said, 'Yes; I want sixty men, and I don't want nobody but volunteers neither.' So he said I might go and git 'em. So I went down to my regiment, 'n I picked out forty old Fifth New York men—the 146th was a new regiment, 'n they'd put these old veterans in to give 'em a *mowrail.* Then I went to another regiment, 'n got twenty-five more; that was sixty-five, all told. So I got 'em all ready, and I arranged with Warren that when I'd got down in the valley and got things all straight, I'd wave a handkerchief, 'n then they could git up on the rock. Then I told my men, 'Now,' says I, 'we must break down this slope jest like dust till we git into them rocks down there, and then we must scatter and take cover, pretty much every man for himself. But, one thing—don't you none on you fire till you see me do it. I'm agoin' to git a good place, and blaze away jest as fast as I can, so's to make 'em think there's a whole party o' men jest behind that one rock where I am. Then you wait for 'em to reply. There ain't but about twenty on 'em, all down in that nest o' rocks there in the Devil's Den. When they fire at me, you watch and fire at the place, and there'll be eight or ten on ye firin' at every one on 'em, and somebody 'll hit him.' So we got all ready, and away we went, tearin' down the hill like mad. They giv' us a volley or two when they saw us a-comin', and picked off about a dozen killed and wounded; so when we got down among them ledges and boulders, about two hundred yards away from where the sharpshooters was, I had 'bout fifty-five men. So I went to work a-blazin' away, and the boys they got down behind the stones, and, amongst us, we kep' up a hell of a fire; for every one o' my men had a hundred rounds of ammunition. And every once in a while we'd see one o' them sharpshooters jump up and fling up his hands.

"Then they began to slacken their fire, and my boys had been kinder drawin' up towards me; so says I, 'Now, boys, we'll make a little charge over in there, 'n see if we can't find some o' them fellers.' So we charged over in there, and we thought we'd got pretty near where they was, and we couldn't see nothin' on 'em. You see, 'twas all full o' nothin' but rocks, and they was hid. So I was satisfied that we'd pretty much silenced their fire anyhow, and so I out with my handkerchief and waved it, and the officers they hopt up on the rock. So the rebels, when they saw that, they got mad, and they went to firin' agin, and we began too. So there was a feller a layin' alongside o' me, Sargeant Weaver his name was, and he see a place where one o' the rebels was a firin' out of. So I looked, and there the feller had built up a little place between two rocks with loose stone, and he'd put a big rock across on top, and there he was, a firin' through a porthole at us. So Weaver he wanted to fire at him, and says I, go ahead. So Weaver fired, but he didn't hit him. Well, I had my gun all ready, and I watched close, and when this here feller drew back to load up again, (here the speaker imitated the movements of one ramming down a bullet,) I could jest see the back of his head one side of that are rock. So I let him have it, and the bullet struck him right in the middle of his neck, right here, (touching the base of the skull behind.) I should think he jumped up in the air about four feet. Well, when we seen that, we all gave a hurraw, and we charged right over in there, and we gobbled up every one o' them fellers, all except two.

"Well, as soon as the rest on 'em saw what we was up to, a regiment on 'em came down to try and git them sharpshooters back agin. So then our regiment had to come down in bodily to support us. Then a rebel brigade came in, and then our brigade came down too, and we drove 'em back after a little while, and advanced our line the whole of that are two hundred yards, and kept it too.

"When I went up to see Warren, he said all sorts o' things to me, and promised to give me a medal and a commission, and all that. But I don' 'spect to git 'em. Folks forgit easy."

By four o'clock on Friday morning, July 3, the sounds of battle were heard far away on the right wing, on the eastern slopes of Culp's Hill. But before this, before the birds sang, while the very twilight hesitated in uncertainty, Alice was up and out. Nor was it long before the ambulances were moving to explore the remotest parts of the battle-field. Alice sought to retrace again the path of her yesterday's excursion. But scarcely could she recognize a feature, in the cold gray of morning, of that scene which she had seen late the afternoon in the lurid light of the sun lying low, and in the smoke and wild confusion of battle.

She was alone. She carried, besides a flask and roll of bandages, nothing. Following the road, over the northern edge of Little Round Top, down into the dell below, then inclining to the left, she began to recognize the place where she had seen Barton in the very thick of battle. With trembling eagerness she looked on every hand. The wounded had mostly been removed. Heaps of dead showed where the weight of battle had fallen. Suddenly and like an arrow shot from a bow, she sprang from the path to the edge of a low forest or thicket, where an officer, half reclining, half sitting, either was asleep, or was dead. It was Tom Heywood.

Alice paused at a few steps; then, venturing nearer—pale, very pale—spoke as if she would waken him from sleep.

"Mr. Heywood! Mr. Heywood!"

Timidly, yet eagerly, she came close to him, laid her hand upon his arm; it fell heavily as she pressed it. She touched his hand and the truth flashed upon her,—he was dead! As one bewildered, and even yet uncertain but that he slept, she gazed upon his calm and noble face.

"Speak to me! Do wake! It is Alice—Alice Cathcart! Oh Heywood, I would speak to you if it were I lying so! He is not dead! It cannot be death!"

Then looking long and wildly, as a child looks shudderingly into some dark room at night, she lowered her voice and said, in a hoarse whisper:

"He is dead! O God, take *me!*"

Already the light seemed vanishing, and Alice fell fainting upon Heywood's breast. At last she had found upon his bosom a brief rest of love!

A man lying in the edge of the thicket called out to Hiram, who soon after was coming that way:

"I say! I say, stranger!"

"Well, what's up? Where are ye? Oh, there you are. Are you hurt badly?"

"No matter 'bout me jest yet. I kin wait. But I reckon somebody oughter take care of that gal yonder. She's got a fit o' faintin'. That man there is Col. Heywood. He commanded our boys. He was shot yisterday about the time I was. He lived an hour or two, but never spoke."

Hiram needed no quickening as soon as he saw Alice. Lifting her tenderly in his arms, he carried her back to the edge of a small stream that crossed the road but a little back, and then he bathed her face freely.

"Poor child, I guess you've got about the worst wound yit. Alice! Alice! Poor thing, her heart's broke. I allus suspected how 'twas. There—there—that's right; open your eyes. Gracious! don't groan so—don't, child! It'll all be right, poor little thing!"

As she revived, Alice looked at Hiram in a scared and bewildered way. Little by little her memory came with consciousness.

'Hiram, let me go back."

"Why, Alice, don't," said Hiram, in a coaxing way, at the same time drawing her gently by the hand.

"Hiram, I *must* go to him. He is *not* dead! If we only go quick he will come to. Do go, Hiram—do go!"

It was not in human nature to resist. A short walk brought them again to Heywood. The moment they reached his feet, with sudden revulsion of feeling, Alice stopped short.

"Hiram, he *is* dead! He will never speak again! Oh, how noble! Is he not beautiful?"

"Why, Alice, I didn't know as he was in love with you!"

Had he pierced her with a sword she could not have shown a face of anguish such as she instantly exhibited. Then, in a low and half-whispered tone she said—a slight color coming to her pale cheek:

"No—he did not love me. But I loved him. And now he never will know it. Oh! Hiram, he was good and noble!"

After a moment's pause she said artlessly:

"You don't think it was wrong, do you, Hiram? I am not sorry. I am not ashamed of it. He was very noble!"

"Lord bless you, child, it was all right, poor thing—it was jest as right as it could be."

Hiram pulled out a cotton handkerchief, which he carried in his hat, and after hemming and coughing a little, and dabbing it first to one eye and then to the other, he began, he did not exactly know why, to wipe his hat; an operation less needful, as it was a straw hat.

Alice sat down by Heywood, apparently unconscious that any one was present. Her thoughts were like an unloosed boat, with no one at the rudder, which turns round and round in the tide, and drifts just as the wind or under currents impel it—a boat upon a troubled water and under a dark sky.

"Oh, cruel, cruel! to pick the fairest and noblest! The wicked and ugly have escaped, and he is gone, so good! so good!—Eyes that shall never see again—lips that shall never speak—hands that are death cold! So true—so beautiful—so good! He *was* good! Hush! he stirred! Hiram?"

Hiram had tact enough not to oppose Alice, and humoring her idea that Heywood was only in a swoon, he said:

"I guess, Miss Cathcart, we better take him over, and let the doctors see if any thing can be done for him. Mebbe he'll come to."

"Oh, yes! Hiram, dear Hiram, do take him to the camp."

"Well, if you'll go back, I'll see to it. You can't be no help here, and you may be, over there."

Directing some of the ambulance men to remove the body, he led Alice away to Rose.

In a sunny field, close up under the edge of a grove, and about half way between Little Round Top and the bridge across the Rock Creek, of the Baltimore turnpike, a grave was prepared. A chaplain from the sixth corps, of his own church, read the solemn burial service. Three women, half a dozen men, stood around. The roar of distant cannon was the only response.

The sun fell warm in the very grave. Rose had plucked from the near trees some burnished oak-leaves; and hastily plaiting them to a wreath, laid them on Heywood's breast. Thus fell one who hated the war, but was swept into it by the turbulent tide of revolution which he had not strength to resist.

Agate Bissell proposed to Rose that they should send Alice to the farm-house of old father Lobdell, where they had spent Wednesday night. But all thoughts of planning for her comfort were laid aside when they saw Alice's conduct.

After she returned to the hospital, she arranged her apparel with more than common care, stepped forth calmly, but firmly to her merciful duties. Her face was serene but without smiles. Her care and pity, always striking, had in them now an austere tenderness that struck the rudest men with awe and admiration, as if an inspired priestess were among them. Nor, to the end, did Alice ever mention Heywood's name, nor for one waking hour, did she ever forget it!

CHAPTER LII.

THE LAST ENDEAVOR.

On the third day of July, and the third of the complex battle of Gettysburg, Lee, having in vain assaulted the left of the Union line on the day before, determined to break through the centre, and at the same time to enlarge the hold which he had secured upon the extreme Union right, on the eastern slope of Culp's Hill. But by four in the morning Meade attacked the intrusive forces which had thus, while yesterday's battle raged on the extreme left, as it were stolen in on the right, and by eleven o'clock they were driven out, thus anticipating and defeating Lee's intention of turning the Union right.

A wonderful silence now came over the vast battlefield and brooded for the space of two hours. Birds sang again, though the ground beneath them was covered with unburied men. The rustling of leaves could be heard once more by the men who lay resting under the trees. But the very silence, that usually brings all thoughts of peace, now sharpened men's fears. It was like that dreadful calm which precedes the burst of storms. Just such it was. At one o'clock it was broken by an uproar as wonderful as had been the silence. Two hundred and thirty-five cannon joined in a clangor of death, such as had never been heard upon this continent. Lee had concentrated a hundred and forty-five guns over against the centre of Cemetery Ridge, and Meade replied with eighty guns—all that could be well placed in his narrower space. The other battle before seemed noiseless compared with this immense cannonading. The slopes of Oak Ridge and the swells upon the further side of the valley seemed on fire. Each little hill-top became a volcano. From the right, from the left, from the centre, battery upon battery, and parks of batteries flamed and thundered. The smoke rolled up white and bluish-gray, as storm-clouds lift and roll up the sides of mountains. From every direction came the flying missiles—cross-ploughing Cemetery Hill with hideous furrows, in which to plant dead men. Shot flew clear over the ridge—caissons sheltered behind the hill were reached and blown up. Horses standing harnessed to reserved artillery, in places before secure, were smitten down. Strange was the discordant music of the missile sounds, for which there were no pauses, that filled the air. Some went hissing, some flew with muffled growl, some shook out a gushing sound like the rush of waters; some carried with them an intense and malignant howl; some spit and sputtered in a spiteful manner; others whirred, or whistled, or spun threads of tenor or treble sounds. But whatever the variety in this awful aerial music, all meant death. If a thousand meteors had burst, and each one flung down shattered masses of meteoric stone, it would have scarcely seemed more like a deluge of iron rain than now it did. Orderlies and aids found the roads and fields on the far side of the hill, safe before, now raining with bullets. Meade's head-quarters were riddled and his staff driven to another position. In a half-hour all the fields were cleared and the men were under cover. Fortunately, the enemy's artillery was elevated too much. The Union soldiers escaped with comparatively little harm, while the reverse of the hill was excoriated with shot and shell. In the burial-ground on the head of Cemetery Ridge, projecting toward the village of Gettysburg, fell the iron hail, rending the graves and splintering the monuments. Flowers growing on graves were rudely picked by hurtling iron. Soldiers who had fallen at Fair Oaks, and had been brought here for burial, far away from all thought of battle, in this quiet Pennsylvania vale, were still pursued by war, which rudely tore up their graves; and they heard again the thunder of battle swelling above these resting-places, where, it would seem they should have found quiet.

When it had thundered and rained iron for more than two hours, there came moving across the valley fifteen thousand men to take possession of that ridge! As they moved from afar the Union artillery smote them; but they did not heed it. As they drew near, still rent by shot and shell,—earnest, eager, brave,—there burst upon their right flank a fire of musketry and artillery that quite crumpled up and swung back their men upon their centre. Next, their left wing was utterly riddled and routed by the sharpness of the musketry; and what part was not captured fled and escaped. But the massive centre, with men as brave as ever faced death, stern, headlong, pushed right up to Hancock's lines, and across them, but could come no further! Like a ship whose impetus carried it far up upon a shoal, from which it cannot recede when it would, several brigades had shot, by the terrible momentum, so far up, that when from the slopes of the cemetery, and from the artillery on Meade's left wing, they were enfiladed, while Hancock, with fresh brigades drawn from his left, met them in front with a fire that pierced like a flame, they yielded themselves up. They had gotten the hill for which they came, but not as victors. The rest shrunk, driven backward, sharply raked with artillery and scorched with sheets of musketry, got them out of the battle, and fled across the valley to their lines, whence they should come no more out hitherward. Many that longed to go with them lay with pitiful wounds. A thousand that an hour before were fierce in ambitious expectation, now and never more cared what befell them, nor what happened under the sun. When the sun went down on that 3d of July, the Union army, a mighty sufferer in more than twenty thousand slain and wounded men, yet had never such cause of rejoicing for the coming anniversary day as now, when all those thousands of men joyfully had died or suffered wounds to preserve that nation's life whose birthday is celebrated on the Fourth of July!

The morning of Saturday, the 4th of July, rose fair over Gettysburg. Ewell's corps of Lee's army withdrew from the town and Howard's troops immediately took possession.

There was great joy throughout the Union army. Officers congratulated each other; the men were raised to the proudest exultation. The army of the Potomac, the victim of misfortunes, but always a model of indomitable patience, had at length met their great antagonist in a long and severe fight, and thoroughly defeated him. While all were exhilarated with the immediate victory, the thoughtful men of the army experienced a deeper gladness in their prescience of the scope of this victory in its relation to public affairs. The climax was reached. Henceforward the Confederate cause was subject to decline, weakness and extinction

The work of burying the dead engaged large details of soldiers The wounded were sought out more assiduously. Lee having withdrawn his right wing from before Round Top and concentrated his whole force on the hills over against Gettysburg, there could be no danger in going over on the field of battle. Relief parties were busy. Among the rocks of Round Top and Devil's Den wounded men were found in fissures, slid down into gaping chasms, and in the black seams, pits and caves which abounded in that savage tangle of giant rocks. But it is probable that many wounded died unsuccored in those dark spaces, and that the bones of many yet lie buried but unsepulchred, with the huge rocks around them as stones of hiding rather than of memorial.

The farm-houses were filled with wounded; barns were filled; the fields were as full as, in a few days, they would have been of sheaves of the wheat which had been so strangely threshed by the feet of wounded men. The town was full; all the sheltered spots and nooks were full. A large number of the enemy's wounded, particularly of the last day's battle, remained upon the field; the total was swelled to an extraordinary aggregate. This little hamlet of a few hundred people had become a great city of wounded men.

The tidings of the battle spreading through the land had begun already to bring hither those who had sons in the fight. As fast as trains could be dispatched, those of the wounded who could be transported were sent away to various cities, for better care. The horror of the scene was much alleviated by the cheerfulness of the wounded. As soon as their wounds had been dressed, and they were placed in comfortable circumstances, those not desperately hurt grew quite talkative and even merry. The women of Gettysburg, and the wives of the farmers living in the region, devoted themselves to the care of the sufferers with heroic devotion. But the stolid farmers and men of the district round about the town, manifested neither patriotism nor humanity, practising every extortion, and wringing out money for a drop of water given to the wounded men who had fallen in the defence of their homes and lives!

There are no contrasts more striking than those between human feeling and the moods of the atmosphere. On this fourth day of July a joyous sun arose over the most sorrowful scene that it could well look upon. Three days had converted a peaceful valley into a Golgotha. No form of injury which the human body can receive was wanting. The ingenuity of nature in the production of life is not greater than the ingenuity of death in the destruction of life. Leaves and flowers are not more varied in form than were wounds. From the crown of the head to the sole of the feet, there was not a point in the human body which had not been pierced. The wildest caprice had revelled in singularities of effects. Men received a mere scratch of a glancing ball, and the shock overthrew their nervous system. Another, with wounds on every limb, the lungs pierced, bones broken, the head torn, trampled on by men, run over by artillery, stabbed, shot, hacked, bruised, given up by surgeons, still clung to life and climbed back again to health! The fields bore ghastly harvests of suffering men. The sun came up and shined upon them as if they were but heads of yellow wheat. Their tremblings and shrinkings were to nature only as the quivering of leaves in the frolicsome wind; their groans and sighs passed for no more than the singing of birds or the low moaning of the pines.

The morning seemed an emblem of victory to the unwounded and exultant soldiers. They said: "The sun triumphs! Nature exults! The heavens and the earth rejoice with us!"—But how was it to the wounded man—too weak to turn away his face from the sun which shone full upon it with blistering heat? How was it with hundreds of parents and friends, wandering up and down through all the vast field in search of some child, brother, lover? What mockery of grief was it, as the mother sat down by the corpse of her only son, that the heavens cared not, that it spread its brilliant arch without sympathy for aught below it, and that the heartless sun marched on over anguish, desolation and despair, as if this had been, not a battle, but a banquet.

Could a pitiful God look down through the air on such a scene and not fill it with his sympathy, and change it to a soberer hue? Alas! this great field of war was but a point, a mere punctuation mark of blood, in the history of that world which groans and travails in pain until now! As the midwife, in the throes and groans of the mother, heeds not the pain, but waits for the child that shall bring joy out of woe, so we must needs think the Merciful heeds not the forms of suffering, but looks beyond, at the blessings wrought by them. When at last account shall be taken of all the blood that has been shed and of all the tears that have fallen, then the most wonderful name of God will be, THE LONG SUFFERING!

And God has taught the Sun to see beyond and through the beginnings of things to their ends.

For the Sun forever sees life and not death. It beholds in the revolution of the sod, not the roots that die, but the harvests which shall spring from their death. Death is but the prophet of life. The evil is but for a moment. The benefit runs through the whole season. What if twenty thousand wounded men lie groaning here? It is the price of a nation's life! The instruments of their great conflict were carnal, but its fruits spiritual.

War ploughed the fields of Gettysburg, and planted its furrows with men. But, though the seed was blood, the harvest shall be peace, concord, liberty, and universal intelligence. For every groan here, a hundred elsewhere ceased. For every death now, a thousand lives shall be happier. Individuals suffered; the nation revived!

Shine on, O Sun! that beholdest evermore the future! Thou wilt not, glorious Eye of Hope,—ever looking at the ends,—be veiled or mourn because the ways are rough through which God sends universal blessings!

I cannot say that such thoughts as these passed through the mind of Rose Wentworth on this glorious morning after victory. But had some one thought aloud such thoughts, she would have been in full and instant sympathy with them. There was a latent sense of the great mercy to the nation of this victory which lifted her above the mere sight of the eyes, and instead of being depressed with the vast sacrifice spread around her, she had an instinct of its meaning, and a calm and peaceful gladness. She had need to have it.

"I wonder where Pete is?" said Agate Bissell, as it drew toward noon. "I have not seen him this morning. He ought to be here and tell us about Barton."

"There comes Hiram," said Rose; "he will do as well. What a brave fellow Hiram is! He has shown more courage, and performed more work, too, in succoring the wounded, than if he had carried a musket. All the brave men are not in the ranks."

Something disquieted Hiram Beers this morning. He had little to say and seemed fidgety. He picked up things only to lay them down, and worked without any purpose. At last, he gave way:

"'Tain't no use, Rose; you may's well know it fust as last. I've got a letter for you from Barton, and I expect it's the last one you'll ever git from him."

Rose stopped, and, raising herself to her full height, looked fixedly and even commandingly upon Hiram.

"Hiram, has Barton fallen?"

"I don't know; I'm afraid so. I can't find nothin' of him. Pete's gone; nobody's seen him to-day. Barton's officers say they saw him fall in a charge yesterday, and that he didn't come back with his men, and that he must be dead. But we've hunted everywhere for his body and can't find it. I was up there the night before the last battle. He said something would happen to him in that fight. He felt it. He told me to wait till he wrote this letter. If he got out safe, I was to bring it back to him; but if he was killed, I was to give it to you."

Rose took the letter, and read:

"I have a presentiment, Rose, that something will befall me to-morrow. If you receive these lines I shall have fallen, and my words will be forgiven as of one dead. Rose, I have vainly tried to conquer that love which has so taken possession of my life as to overcome all other feelings. As early as I can remember, I loved you. It has grown with my manhood. It is a part of my being! Not to love you would be not to be myself. When I told you all this, on leaving home, I had hoped for some sympathy; I plead for only a word. My letter was not answered or noticed. Perhaps your silence was best. It was hard to bear. If I could have ceased loving, I could have conquered the pain of that refusal which you gave by silence. It will not be a trouble to you any longer to know that a heart has loved you beyond every other thing. My latest, strongest feeling, Rose, is love for you! My last wishes and prayers invoke blessings on you! I go toward darkness; but there is a light beyond. In Heaven, O Rose, in Heaven shall meet you, and say, I love you, without fear of repulse.

BARTON CATHCART."

Rose stood silent and motionless. Amazement, sorrow and joy filled her heart. She whispered to herself:

"He loved me! He loved me always!—best!—to the last! He told me of it! When? *what* letter? There has been some dreadful mistake! . This is his writing—this is Barton's writing!—and here it is written down: '*My latest, strongest feeling, Rose, is love for you!*' And he will never know that I loved him more!

Noble soul, if thou art in heaven, God will tell thee how thou art loved!--And he wrote to me! wrote to tell me all this when first leaving Norwood? Where is that treacherous letter that did not fulfil its message?"

Rose called to Alice. There was something in her manner so high and commanding, that Alice scarcely believed that this was Rose. She had never seen her in a mood of such exaltation.

"Alice, my sister, Barton has left us!" Alice could not look paler than she already was, but a ghastly, ashen hue came over the white of her fair face. "Read this, Alice.—Can you not? Let me read it to you."

With a firm, low voice, Rose read every word without faltering. Barton's words of love seemed to inspire her soul. There was a triumph in the gentlest of her tones that showed that sorrow had in it an overmastering joy.

Alice looked upon Rose with wonder.

In a low and solemn way, with a wondering, inquiring look she said:

"I cannot understand you! It all seems dreadful to me! God is full of anger toward us both."

"Alice, God loves us both! Oh! I know not what joy that would have been of loving, had Barton lived and loved me, since even in death his love is so full of joy and thrilling. I am more glad than sorrowful. He loved me! loved me always! loved me to the end! My heart sings; only my eyes weep! Come, Alice, let not people see us."

They walked along the edges of the woods. Again the little birds were singing,—the melancholy pee-wee, the pine-warbler, the vireo. They came to Heywood's grave. The sun shone brightly upon it. Already some one had transplanted, from the edges of the wood, clumps of flowers.

Poor Alice, tears running down her cheeks, turned to Rose:

"Oh, Rose, tell me how to feel as you do! My heart was sunk down so low that there is no more light for me! I have envied the dead around me. I want to go. God does not love me enough to let me die!"

"Alas, Alice, grief poisons you! me it cheers. I am glad that I suffer. Can death have divided you from your lover, but given mine to me? Barton's death has made him mine. Oh, noble soul!

oh, heavenly hero! oh, spirit walking free in glory!—death, that separates others, unites us! I am thine! I am henceforth wedded till thou come for me! Oh, Alice, why should I be sad? My heart is with him. My thoughts walk with him. My life is lifted up higher than sorrows ever fly!"

"Oh, Rose! you make me feel worse than ever. You seem gone away from me. I cannot follow you. When he fell, the whole world fell too, to me. I cannot see any thing that is bright. I do not love any body now—nor you, nor father, nor mother, nor myself. Oh! my heart is very angry. God is cruel, Rose!—I will speak it. God is cruel to me—very cruel. I don't want to live; and, if I were to die, *he* would not love me *there!*"

Rose was drawn down from her own high thoughts by Alice's childlike outburst of sorrow.

"My sister, I *am* sorry. I am more sorry for you than for myself. You do not know what you say, that you love nothing. Your heart is like a bird driven into the woods by a thunder storm. By and by it will sing again. But I know that God loves you, or he would not so afflict you. All this black will be white by and by. Be brave, and resist the selfishness of sorrow."

"Rose, I am not selfish. I shall give my whole life away for others. I was not selfish. I did not ask great happiness for myself. I only wanted him to love me enough to let me love him. I would not have troubled him. I could have kept trouble from him, and helped him a little, and loved when I could stand a little way off and look at him. He would never love me as Barton loved you, Rose. Oh, you will never know all of that! But if after a great while he should say, 'Alice, I am always happier when you are by me,' oh, Rose, the angels in the resurrection will say nothing so sweet as that would be! But he will never say it now!"

Rose caught at Barton's name.

"Did Barton confide his feelings to you, Alice?"

"Yes, he did. No, he did not. I mean, I knew them without his saying any thing. And I am sure he knew mine. And we both knew that the other knew all; and so, when he would say a few words and stop, I knew all the rest."

"It is strange—very strange—that Barton did not speak."

"It is stranger that you should have needed to have him. If *he* had been near me, as Barton was near you, and felt as Barton did, I should have known it, just as I know the morning s come when it floods my window with light."

Rose mused a moment:

"My time had not come. I was like one who hears sounds in his sleep and turns them all into the fabric of his dream. Surely I knew! and yet I knew not. It was like seed sown before the ground is warm. But the summer floods me now. Every seed is a blossom!"

They sat for a while, silent and thoughtful; then Alice pointed to a clump of columbines that had blossomed by the edge of a rock.

"Rose, you are like those flowers, and trouble seems to move you as the wind does them, only to show the sparkle of the sunlight with every motion. I am like the shadow which they cast upon the rock, that perishes by night, and is but a shadow all day."

Rose still fell off into musing—often talking to herself in a low tone, or half whisper, as one who chants a forming poem to weigh its words.

"O my soul, thou art crowned to-day! O death, that hast taken his presence from me, thou hast given me his heart! In one moment I am bereaved and wedded,—I am cast down and exalted! Barton, thou didst all thy life love me—without response! I, too, all my life will love thee, alone and unrequited!"

Rose took Alice to her bosom and kissed her, with a strange and solemn tenderness which brought tears from her eyes. But Rose neither wept nor was sad.

"Alice, did you know that Barton had written me?"

"I did."

"Why did you never mention it? Was it sisterly? I knew not of it. No letter has ever come to me from Barton. I was sad and dark that he went away forgetting or caring little for his childhood friend.'

"I was not permitted, Rose. Barton solemnly enjoined silence; upon my honor I was not to mention his secret."

"Oh, Alice! this is a day of great joy, and sorrow cannot reach to it, nor pluck it down."

"I can only see grief upon grief. *He* is gone, and Barton is gone. I would that I, too, were gone."

"Poor Alice—dear Alice—if only Heywood would speak to you out of the air, or coming in the vision of the night, saying, 'I do wholly love thee, Alice,' would you not triumph over grief?"

Alice shuddered with intensity of feeling.

"Yes!—if I might know that he loved me, and would always love me, I would go through a thousand years of sorrow and be glad all the way! But, oh! Rose, Rose, he did not love me. It was you—not me."

And Alice wept like a little child. Rose comforted her as a mother comforts her child, and, withdrawing her from thoughts of herself, Rose, half to Alice and half to herself, went on:

"At last I am free. No more checking! No more self-deceiving! No more suffering and misnaming of one's deepest life! No more shame for the heart's best fruit! I am beloved and I love! I almost wish it were known. I would that men could see it on my brow, and read it in my eyes. I would that all that knew him, when they behold me, might say, 'See how his love covers her as with a queen's garment!' I would have such gladness in my eyes that men should say, 'His love is like a crowning flame about her head!'"

"O Rose! I do not understand you. I cannot rise as you do My heart is heavy, my soul is dark, my life is gone out. I dare not murmur, but I cannot submit. I was not called, and yet I loved. Great is my punishment."

"Mourn not, Alice! It is noble to love with an unsullied love! Not those who love are poor, but those who do not. He was poorer that knew not how to love you, than you, whom God made wise to love greatly and divinely. As for me, this is the day of my espousals. I will sing of sorrow now all the days of my life. Since God has taken him into heaven, he will send over all things that the heavens cover, something of his nobleness and honor. The sun shall be brighter to me for his sake; the earth, and all that grows upon it, shall have new meaning now; and every sound that the ear loves to hear shall be to me a part of his voice, saying, 'Rose, I love thee!'"

The clouds had been silently gathering in the sky. First a haze, then films that grew thicker, and a gray tint in the sunlight that changed rapidly toward dark, until soon the whole heaven was sheeted, and rain began to fall; at first gently, but with increasing quantity, until it poured abundantly.

Great battles are said to bring on rain storms A great rain certainly set in on Saturday after the battle. Rock Creek, that had been so shallow that it was easily crossed by the men upon the stones, without wetting their feet, began now to show signs of uneasiness. The water grew discolored. It began to gather volume. One familiar stone after another silently disappeared. It grew more restless, and began to send down flecks of foam. It filled up the edges, clear up to the banks. It still rose as evening came on. That modest, little stream had became surly and despotic. With headlong will it swept all before it, and its usual gentleness was lost in its turbulent rush and roar. But the hospital lay upon both banks of this stream. As the darkness came on, it was plain that the men must be removed. No time was to be lost. Already the stream had reached the wounded. Those who could help themselves climbed the steep slope a little further inland, to which the surgeons began to remove the men. All was haste. Whatever help could be got was impressed. Men with stretchers were busy carrying the badly wounded. With all their effort, two or three, overtaken by the merciless water, were swept away and drowned. When morning came, a raging torrent divided the surgeons, some upon the further bank being unable for hours to cross to the hospital field. The bridge on the Baltimore pike was overflowed, its planks lifted and floated away. The whole night was one of toil and anxiety.

With the morning came joy to Rose. On the second day of the battle, word had been telegraphed to the Northern cities for surgical aid. The enormous accumulation of wounded men, Union and rebels, overtaxed the exertions of the medical corps. At this summons speedily came many scores of men eminent in their profession, for a short service in the field, and among them Dr. Wentworth. Although he arrived on Saturday, it was not until Sunday afternoon that Rose met her father—and then she had to search for him. For, not waiting even to brush the dust from his clothes, nor for food, Dr. Wentworth, within half an hour after reaching Gettysburg, was established and at work. Nor for two days and two nights did he rest for an hour Such were the necessities of the occasion, that with the most heroic energy and perseverance of the regular surgeons of the army, working night and day, and with all the help which they received from volunteers from the profession abroad, it was three or four days before the first round was completed. In some of the field hospitals the wounded were treated as they came, without regard to the side to which they belonged. In other hospitals the Union soldiers were treated first, and in one case three or four hundred rebel wounded waited in a barn some three days before our surgeons could reach their cases. But then the reaction had set in, their nervous systems were prostrated, and they could not endure the operations necessary. Almost every man died. A strange fatality attended some hospitals. In some places almost every wound led to lockjaw, and every attack proved fatal. Some hospitals were more deadly than the battle-field. Of seven hundred men, in one case, who bid fair at first to recover, scarcely a hundred survived. The poison generated by sickness and wounds when vast numbers of men are clustered closely in disadvantageous circumstances is of frightful malignancy. Men fall away like leaves in an October day when east winds strike the trees!

Among the memorials and monuments, the eulogies and honors so deservedly bestowed upon the soldiers and officers of the army some place should be found, not second, for the medical gentlemen, who, as a body, illustrated the highest virtues of patriotism and humanity in their extraordinary zeal and labor. Often much exposed to fire, conversant with fatigue as great as could be endured, brought face to face with all that is horrible and depressing in war, working against insuperable obstacles, maintaining a desperate fight against death, without those almost supernatural excitements which carry men through battles, the surgeons of the army deserve to be ranked with the foremost soldiers. Not a whit less is due to that noble army of nurses who, without fee or reward, devoted themselves unweariedly, from the beginning of the war to the end, to the sick and wounded soldiers, and to the social and moral improvement of those that were well. It is computed that first and last two thousand women, during the war, left homes of refinement and comfort, accepted every hardship of the field and th march, of the camp and of the hospital, with a heroism not sur passed by the soldiers. Women carried with them the inspiration of love and duty, and brought to the camp the remembrances of home, to the hospital the softer graces of humanity, and everywhere a spirit of self-sacrifice and fidelity, that shone like a rainbow upon a scowling cloud of war.

It seems fit, therefore, that among the testimonies of a nation's gratitude some recognition should be given to this rear-guard of humanity! At least it would be a wise and comely act for the Government of this Nation, in the Capital, to rear a monument and inscribe it

TO

THE HEROIC SURGEONS AND THE NOBLE WOMEN

WHO

LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR THE NATION.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE MOUNTAIN COVERT.

The tidings which Hiram Beers brought to Barton's friends will require us to go back a day or two, and to trace the events connected with Barton Cathcart's fate.

No one who saw the calmness and cheerfulness with which Barton awaited the famous charge of Pickett upon the left centre of the Union lines, on Friday afternoon, would dream that he was sad or foreboding. It was not the darkness of despondency or pain. Coming events seemed to him to cast their shadows over him. But there was in this very premonition a cordial. The settled certainty gave calmness, and his Christian hope gave him cheerfulness.

The night before he had, as we have already learned, entrusted Hiram with a message, and he also had made every arrangement with Pete, to secure to his friends the few effects which might become precious in their sight. Pete, though not a fighting character, was made brave in exigencies by his fidelity. He took good care of his own person, unless General Cathcart was in danger; then he almost lost sense of his own peril in his anxiety for his master.

When the grand charge of Pickett's corps had almost expended its force, there was concentrated upon its overtasked ranks such a fire, on either flank and in the front, as no mortal men might endure. Hundreds dropped their muskets and fell flat upon the ground to escape the sweep of fire. A thousand men were captured. The enemy retired sullenly, fighting from point to point, broken up into small bodies. The utter destruction of this, the flower of Lee's army, might have been accomplished had Meade possessed reserves of fresh troops. As it was, several brilliant charges were made, and in all several thousand prisoners captured. It was in such a charge that Barton Cathcart was first severely wounded in the thigh, and then, separated from his men, he found himself surrounded with Confederate soldiers, and borne away in the whirl of the retreating masses. At first, he sought to break through and regain his own side, but a bayonet thrust through the right arm still further disabled him, and he was swept away across the valley, and in half an hour, was within Lee's lines. He was speedily sent to the rear. He lay all night in the open fields, suffering much from his wounds, and musing with some surprise upon his case. Was this, then, all that the presentiment meant? Was it only wounds and captivity, and not death?

But, though at first he felt this relief, every hour of the night, while he pictured to himself the fate of prisoners in Southern prisons, increased the feeling that he had escaped death for a worse fate.

When the morning dawned on Saturday, July 4 his spirits had fallen low. The excitement of battle was over. Just before the dawn came that utter sinking of the spirits which those in trouble so well know. It would seem as if between dark and dawn there was a space, measured by an hour of time, through which the globe moved, infested with malign spirits, that jibe and tempt the weary heart and ride it to the uttermost.

He could not sleep. He could not keep awake. He vibrated wretchedly between waking and sleeping. His head was enough unsettled to make his sleep seem spectral and his waking ghastly. It was out of one of his painful moments of delirious sleep that he woke thinking he heard his name called. There by his side stood Pete. Barton thought at first that it was only another vision of dreams. He looked at him without speaking. But he was not long left in doubt. Pete was overjoyed to be again at his side.

"Why, Pete—is it really *you?*" said Barton, putting his hands upon his brawny arm, to make sure.

"Yes, sir, it's me—'taint nobody else. I guess I owns them feet," said Pete, extending a foot which would answer for a small boat; the shoe, at any rate, suggesting some such idea.

"How in the world did you get here? did you drop down? I thought it was a dream. I've had a good many this morning—but this is the best dream yet."

"Wal, as soon as you didn't come back, I thought somethin had to be done, and I kind o' went down to look arter ye, an they cotched me, and then they axed me who I was, and I told 'em my name was Pete. And they said who did I belong to, and I told 'em I was a free nigger, and took care of Gineral Cathcart, and they larfed considerable, and so they brought me to jest the right place, for the very fust thing I seed this mornin' was you."

All day Lee was sending back his trains, his wounded and prisoners. Cathcart was despatched about noon. It soon began raining. Pete was never a moment away from Barton's side. As the ambulance in which he was conveyed approached the pass through the South Mountain, Pete grew cheerful. It was evident that he purposed something unusual. He said in a low tone to Barton, at a time when the guards were a little in advance—"Gineral, I s'pose you'd jest as lieve git away from these fellers, if you could?"

"There's no chance, Pete. Don't you see the guards on every side?"

"But I want you to be ready, and if I see a chance, you must be spry as you kin with that leg."

A heavy rain was now descending. The road was much choked up, and the trains moved with difficulty. It grew rapidly dark. Either side of the pass was rugged and wild. Pete carried himself in a dull and plodding way, as if he had not a thought in his head. Yet he was watching sharply the soldiers, the character of the ground, where it rose steeply, where ravines on the right or left showed openings. About eight o'clock some interruption at the front caused a halt and a little confusion. One or two shots were heard in the distance. Some one said that the pass, ahead, was in possession of the Union troops. The guards near the ambulance stepped forward for a moment to speak with their commander. Pete looked cautiously about, without turning his head. There were no soldiers within several rods.

To the right, as nearly as he could discover, the rocks did not rise precipitously; but there seemed some kind of opening. In fact, a small stream descended and crossed the road not far below them, and it was some damage to the rude bridge that had checked the column.

Seizing the favorable moment, Pete came to the rear of the ambulance, silently, and reached in his long arm. He gave Barton one or two emphatic twitches, as much as to say:

"Now is your time."

As fast as his wounded leg would allow, Barton worked his body toward the back of the vehicle. No sooner had his legs hung down from a man Pete, turning his back to his master, took Barton on his shoulders and darted instantly into the thicket. His movement was not a moment too soon. The driver, seeing his prisoner gone, cried out. The soldiers, catching a glimpse of Pete, fired upon him, and several of them dashed after him. But at each step the thicket became so difficult that pursuit was soon given up, and the prisoners escaped. But a shot had reached its mark. Entering Barton's side just above his loins, the bullet had traversed the inner walls of the abdomen, and came out at the front.

Every step now grew more difficult. The mountain laurel in spots formed such barriers that it could not well be penetrated. The sound of the stream drew Pete toward it, and he groped his way, sometimes in it, sometimes along its rough and rocky edge; at other times, turned away from the stream by some insuperable obstacle, he plunged again into the thicket. Barton grew faint, and would fain have stopped; but Pete determined to reach some retreat that was at once safe and of better accomodations. The chances seemed poor. The heavy spruce boughs swept in their faces, shaking off showers of drops, which could scarcely add to their discomfort, for they were drenched to the skin already. None but Pete could have proceeded a step in such gloom of night, dark by reason of clouds, and still darker by the overshading trees of this mountain forest. But, though Pete often stumbled, was frequently stopped, and with incredible labor, got along but a little way, yet his great strength enabled him to hold out as few but he could have done, and by some instinct he contrived to keep his direction. For an hour he had toiled on. At length the side of the brook seemed smoother. But it ended suddenly against almost precipitous rocks. The way semed effectually shut up, unless he could find a path by the channel of the brook itself. Carefully laying his burden down, Pete descended to the stream and followed it up. He found that it now issued from a sort of gateway, by a series of cascades which were quite shallow, and that the ascent was an inclination which made it scarcely more difficult than a pair of stairs. Returning to Barton, he bore him carefully up the steep channel; and, at its top, finding the brook more level, he judged that he had reached nearly to the summit of the hills, and that he might find a more accessible path on its banks. There seemed no forest on either hand. Moving away from the stream, and groping along a kind of gravelly bed in search of higher ground that should not be affected by the overflow of the stream that might be expected, should the rain continue all night, Pete, at length, reached some shelving rocks, which furnished not only an elevation above the stream but a partial shelter also Here he gladly laid Barton down. Finding that hemlock boughs were hanging over him, Pete broke off an armful of them to furnish his master with something softer than a rock.

The hours passed slowly and gloomily. Barton could not sleep from the pain of his wounds. Pete was sleepless from anxiety about his charge. The rain at times slackened. Once Pete could discern the clouds above growing thinner and letting through a faint light from the moon. Midnight passed, although they could not determine the time. The rains redoubled their violence. Little rills, formed above them, trickled down from the rocks. The stream began to sound angrily. Pete's ear, alive to every sound, noticed with alarm the change from the shrill sound of shallow water rushing over rocks to a deeper tone, as if the stream were growing to a torrent. The roar became more portentous. Pete peered anxiously from his lurking place into the darkness. Nothing could he see. Another hour passed, another hour of pain to Barton, but of alarm to Pete. The faithful soul would not impart his alarm to his master. He said to himself, "Gosh-a-beely! don't I wish it was light! I don't like this place—I don't now. May be we've got trapped!" His thoughts reverted to the ravine at Norwood, where Heywood had received his fall. Should this be such another, a mere chamber in the rocks, it might suddenly be filled by the rising torrent and become a rockbound reservoir. He listened! Could it be that he was hearing the water just beneath him? It seemed so. Yet the roar of the stream had risen to such a pitch of sound as well nigh to drown all other sounds. He reached down his foot, and drew it up again quickly. The stream *was* rushing along swiftly by the very rocks on which they lay! He waited a half hour, and sounded again. The distance was lessening! The water was rising! He moved cautiously—first in one direction, and then in another—to find on every side that they were shut in! A horror began to fill Pete's soul. He had brought Barton hither to be drowned! Once alarmed, he had no resource in reflection to restrain and moderate it. The poor fellow wept. Speak he would not, for fear of alarming Barton, though he might have shouted without danger of being heard in the thunder of the cataract!

He reached his hand over to see if the water was rising, and to his horror it was even then lapping the very edge of the rock. The foam flitted past him, like specks of faint light. It struck him that he had seen no foam before! It must be growing toward morning! Oh, if it were but light! To be drowned in darkness, to be caught like rats in a trap, and made way with, when, perhaps, if one could only see, there might be a way of escape hardly a step off! Poor Pete gained a slight hope from the sight of the waters. But the morning rose slowly and the waters rose fast. It must be soon or never.

The light dawned at length. Pete began to see the walls of rock on either side. About two hundred yards up, the stream came pelting down with a tremendous plunge, and with that massive movement that indicates great depth of water. Across, from side to side, the chamber of rocks was filled by the stream, which was still hastening wildly, madly, toward the ledge over which Pete had ascended.

The rocks on which they were perched had fallen out of the walls on that side, being sprung from their original place by the frosts. The place was visible from which they had been moved. It was like a huge step in the side of the cliff, about six feet above their heads. Could that be reached, immediate danger, at least, would be over. From the crevices of the rock grew some shrubs; but an old hemlock, that seemed as if it had once had the rheumatism, which left all its joints swollen and twisted, projected from the sides of the rocks, almost at right angles. To catch the boughs and swing himself into the tree, to spring from it upon the rocks where the block upon which Barton lay had once been, was but the work of a moment. But how to get Barton there? He could help himself but very little.

The need was pressing. The water was running clear over the surface of the rock. Pete descended, helped Barton to his feet, placed him in a selected spot, then springing again into the hemlock, and reaching down, he took Barton under the armpits and drew him up upon the trunk. The tree quivered. Should its roots give way it was all over with them! Pete did not wait for inspecton. It was this or nothing. The hardest feat, yet to do Moving back along the trunk, he came to the point least distant from the rock. Seizing Barton with his left arm, he made one bound into which he put every particle of his strength, reached the edge of the rock, wavered, reeled, and fell, but fell forward, and was safe at last!

CHAPTER LIV.

A NIGHT AND A DAY IN THE MOUNTAINS.

THE first step had been taken. But it might be called a step away from danger, rather than a step toward safety. They were safe at least from the peril of waters. On looking back, one now by the morning light could see into what a dangerous position they had wandered. It was a narrow ravine, cloven through solid rock, apparently by some convulsive agency rather than by the slow wearing of waters. When the stream was low it occupied but a small space. But heavy rains brought down from the mountain sides such sheets of water as had the power suddenly to swell the rill to a torrent, and as the exit was quite narrow, the waters, if rains were violent or continued, set back and filled up the whole space.

The place on which Pete now stood with his almost helpless burden, was situated at the mouth of what in a thousand years might become a lateral ravine, sloping toward the gulf from which they had just escaped. There was a depression in the rocks, a kind of rude channel that fortunately did not pursue a straight, steep course, but zigzagged in such a manner that a very strong and agile man might climb to the summit. Had Pete only himself to rescue he would have gone up almost as quickly as a crow could. But his own safety without the rescue of Barton, would have been a great disaster to his simple, faithful soul.

Laying his burden carefully down, Pete began to explore the way. He soon ascended to the summit. But there were points where even Pete Sawmill, with the strength of three men, could not have conveyed himself and Barton too. In so far as mere lifting was concerned, Pete could have carried Barton up as easily as a bear could carry her cub in her mouth. But to lift and spring at the same time, with the dead weight of a sick man upon him, transcended even Pete's power. Could Barton have helped himself enough to cling around Pete, it would have bettered matters.

But the severe strain of battle for two days and two nights, his wounds, and the exposure to cold and rain among the rocks that night, had now rendered Barton quite helpless, and Pete was even afraid that he might die on his hands.

After surveying the several sides and selecting the most feasible, Pete returned to Barton and slowly and with extreme difficulty conveyed him, little by little, to a point more than half-way to the summit. Here he was confronted by an obstacle that seemed likely to stop him. On every side but one the rocks were insuperable. But on the right a perpendicular-faced rock was laced with roots, and overhung with the branches of some stunted trees in a way that, if Pete could but have the use of both arms and feet, he could easily ascend. But how to hold on to Barton and climb with but one hand!

At length, Pete's ingenuity vanquished that difficulty. Barton seemed like a dying man. He moaned when any violent exertion stirred up his pains. He was quite helpless. Pete first tried by passing his sash about him to lash Barton to his own breast. That would not do. He then attempted to loop the sash under Barton's arms, and to pass the other part over his own neck. Both endeavors failed for the same reason. Barton hung down so low that he was quite unmanageable. At length, an idea struck Pete. Whether it was an instinct derived from his pre-existent state, wherein Pete must have been a stalwart bear, or whether he remembered that animals carry their young in their mouths, or whether, still more probably, he remembered the pennies which he had earned (and drank up) in Norwood, for lifting men off from the ground with his teeth, he determined to bring a new force into play that should still leave him the full use of his hands and feet. Winding the sash tightly round and round Barton, close under his arms, he seized it with his mouth, and, straightening himself up, he found that Cathcart's feet fairly cleared the ground. He now, with his arms and legs free, could without difficulty climb the rock. While Pete was thus occupied, two pair of eyes were peering out from above upon him, with an expression that boded no good.

"What dat, Sam? Look a dar—what dat, I say?"

"Oh, Lord, I tink he be bar!"

"Dat bar's got a big cub, den—dat's what I say! Mighty strong mouf!"

"Oh, lord, lord! I tink it be debbil--cotcht a sinner—gwine to eat him up—oh, lord-a-marcy!"

"Shut up nigger! I know what ee be! it's a reb. Don't you see his clo's? He's reb ossifer! Git me some rocks, nigger! If he tote dat feller under here, I smash 'im head!"

Pete had come to the very place designated, and our story would have had an abrupt termination, had not the more intelligent of the two negroes above observed something in the uniform, as Pete laid down his burden, that looked less like a rebel than he at first supposed. Whereupon, a parley ensued.

"I say, dar, you better stop!"

Pete, much surprised, looked in every direction, at this summons; but could see no one.

"Who's that?" he said; and instantly imagining help at hand, he added: "Where are you? Jist come and give us a lift, will ye? I'm afeered the gineral will die."

Two woolly heads protruded from the bushes, on the summit above him, the one looking cautiously and the other timidly down upon him.

"Who be dat? W'at you got dar? Rebel?"

"No, it is Gineral Cathcart of the Union army. We got away from the rebs last night. He's badly wounded. Can't ye give a fellow a lift now?"

"You wait now, I tell ye! Sam, you go for Massa Jacob, quick."

It was not more than ten minutes, though to Pete it seemed hours, before Jacob appeared, in the form of a comely young man of about twenty-two years of age. His hair was long; his hat something wide of brim, though rather rough; but his speech at once bespoke him of the excellent and honorable family of Friends, or, as the world will have it, Quakers.

He needed no explanations. Union or rebel, a wounded man must not die unhelped. Despatching one of his men for some halters, he soon had made a line long enough and strong enough to lift Barton up. Pete was at the summit quite as soon. A walk of about five minutes conveyed them to a rude hut, built originally by charcoal burners, but now patched a little and made tenantable. Pete speedily told his story, and learned, on the other hand, that he had stumbled upon a hiding place. Cattle and horses. Within a stone's throw there were a hundred and more cows and oxen. and some three score fine horses, the half of the neat stock and two-thirds of the horses belonging to Paul Hetherington, the father of the comely youth who had rescued them. Several contrabands, who during the war had escaped from Virginia, and who had found employment on Hetherington's farm, were more than willing to retreat into the mountains with the cattle, for reasons of their own safety, while the rebel army remained in the valley.

Jacob Hetherington, fortunately, had some little medical knowledge. He had been much among the wounded at the battle of Antietam. He had already conveyed to Gettysburg, on two several days, a load of various comforts for the wounded. But, sorely to his regret, he could not devote himself to the work of humanity, being needed at home to superintend this new department in the mountains.

Barton's wounds were at once cleansed and bound afresh. Spirits he had none; but hot coffee was soon prepared. The young Friend put his own coat on Barton, wrapping himself in a blanket.

It was full time for Barton Cathcart to receive some succor. Wounded twice upon Friday afternoon, his weary progress on Saturday, the additional wound on making his escape, the cold rains, the rude kindness of Pete, by which he was dragged through bushes and over rocks, without nourishment, and without stimulants, all this had brought him down to such weakness that he seemed likely to sink away of mere exhaustion. His pulse was very feeble, his skin cold, and his whole system very low. Jacob Hetherington was alarmed. The wound upon his abdomen was likely to be mortal. If the ball had sunk deep within, he would die within a few hours, and all his appearance indicated the approach of this catastrophe. Even if no interior part had been sundered, much was to be feared from inflammation, and he was in no state to bear a peritoneal fever.

Jacob Hetherington was a rigid temperance man, as also was his father, and the young man presented such a wholesome cheek, a skin so pure, an eye so unstained with morbid blood, that he was a walking commendation of abstemiousness. Albeit not given to violence, yet, if any one had doubted whether a "total abstainer" could be strong, he had only to repair to some green and grassy spot for a wrestling bout, and every doubt would disappear! Jacob was well satisfied with his own principles and practice; and yet, when he saw Barton's condition he sorely regretted that some body of an opposite view was not in his camp. He had strictly forbidden the use of intoxicating drinks among his father's hired men, and now, when he would have given a river full of cold water for a pint of whiskey, not a drop was to be had. Jacob questioned Pete on the subject.

"Wal, I brought a flask along, but when I got in the rebel camp the fellers went through me mighty quick, and one on 'em pulled out my flask, and sez he, 'Ah, nigger, this pocket pistol is very dangerous—might go off.' I never seed it agin."

"I am afraid that your master will suffer for want of stimulants. He may die for want of a gill of brandy."

Pete was a good deal troubled.

"Brandy? Why don't you give 'im whiskey? Our folks give 'em whiskey when the brandy gives out."

"But I have no whiskey. There is none in camp. None of my men ever touch it."

"S'pose you jest ask 'em. Mebbe some on 'em got it accidental like."

Jacob had no hope in the matter. His orders had been peremptory. He knew that his men would obey. Besides, he did not believe that they could use whiskey and he not perceive it. Yet he called his men.

"Have any of you got a little whiskey?"

They all looked horror-struck!—No, none of them!

"This gentleman will die on our hands, I fear, unless I can procure some immediate relief. Sam, I think you had better go down to the settlement—you might even take one of the colts—and get a flask of whiskey. I will give you a dollar for it."

Great as was Sam's aversion to whiskey, he had a yet more terrible dread of rebel soldiers. Any thing rather than venture down where he might be caught. Indeed, the urgency of the case awoke in Sam's memory something which he had entirely forgotten.

"Why, sah, I jis 'member dat Dutchman, las' night, had a bottle I see him drink suthin', and den he hide 'em in de rock. He wanted me to drink — 'course I wouldn't, 'case I knew 'twas whiskey.

Pete was impatient.

"What's the use, you nigger, in lyin' so? If you've got a bottle, you go git it—pretty quick, I say!"

Pete's words were far more efficacious than Jacob's. For Pete had had a pull at that bottle already, and knew its quality. His only doubt respected the amount of contents left. All three of the colored men had tasted it, and none of them hurried themselves.

Sam soon appeared bearing a junk bottle in which a cob served as a cork. He seemed to be an entire stranger to it. He took out the stopper, and looked in to see if there was any thing there. He held it up to the sky for the same purpose. He smelt of it.

"I guess um whiskey—spects so! mighty bad stuff," said Sam, with the most virtuous look of disgust at this dangerous substance. "Massa nebber let a nigga have um—put de debbil in de nigga."

The grave smile that lay upon Jacob's face indicated that he had his own opinion of this new miracle of whiskey from the rocks, and of the story about the Dutchman hiding it there, but he eagerly took it, turned out its contents—alas! but slender—into a tin cup of coffee.

"Better than none, but far from sufficient. I would give thee another dollar for a bottle full."

His master's wishes were a law to Sam—with such sanction appended; he renewed his search, and faith and diligence were rewarded. That Dutchman had hid another bottle in the same place! but, cunningly as he had secreted them, Sam found them, —showing that he had the natural gifts for a detective under the excise law.

As soon as Barton had been attended to, Pete left him in charge of Jacob Hetherington, while he himself went with the plantation negroes to view the cattle. Pete's great size, his lofty manners toward his humble attendants, the awfulness of that knowledge which they thought he possessed, served to make him an object of hardly less than reverence.

Descending rapidly from the point where the cabin was, they came to a kind of basin, sheltered on all sides by ridges. It might once have been a lake. From springs breaking out here, ran that stream which had nearly swallowed up Pete during the night. And the reason of its sudden rise was soon apparent. All the rain falling on these slopes was conveyed as by a tunnel to the one outlet, and an hour's hard rain was enough to set the brook a roaring; while a half day's rain sent down through the narrow defile such torrents of water as stirred it to a rage and a violence awful to behold!

In this mountain basin were collected about a hundred head of cattle, Paul Hetherington's and his neighbors. Rude divisions were attempted to keep them somewhat separate, lest being strangers they should punish each other. For, cattle partake of human feelings in this respect, that they quarrel with all that do not belong to their barnyard. In spite of short commons they looked remarkably well. A rebel quartermaster would have blessed his luck could he have plumped down on this mountain nest!

But it was the horses that gave to Pete his chief delight. They were hitched singly or in pairs along every little level spot, on terraces, and in snug coves. Two teams of huge gray Conestoga horses; a span of sorrels, with light manes and tails, with a brown stripe along from withers to rump; a pair of blood-bay mares. daintily built, and yet strong and serviceable; a score of brawny, hard-featured work horses, eight fine brood mares, a pen with five or six fine colts, two full-blood Messenger mares, and a full-blood stallion, between chestnut and sorrel, with white feet, and with a disposition not the most amiable. He seemed angry at his rude quarters. He was savage as a Roman exile. As Pete came toward him, Old Duke lashed out at him in a style that Pete regarded as an invitation to a funeral, and which would have led to one if Pete had not been on his guard.

But that horse was never foaled that Pete feared. He passed toward his head, and though the vicious beauty laid back his ears till they seemed to sink into his head, and showed an ugly muzzle, Pete fixed his eye full on him, spoke in low, decided tones, moved quietly but firmly right up to him, and in a minute the stallion ate out of his hand, and whinnied when Pete left him. If his companions had reverenced Pete before, they worshipped him now. This fascination which he seemed to exercise over the animal kingdom addressed itself to Sam's understanding far more effectively than if Pete had spoken ten modern languages and built St. Peter's church.

The mountain air was peculiarly exhilarating to Pete. The longer he stayed with these contrabands the more amiable he became, and when he returned to the cabin after an hour's absence he was extremely gracious; he laughed, and chuckled, and sputtered by turns, in a manner which, in any other person, would have indicated an over dose of whiskey. It could not be, however, that Tom had secreted any more mountain dew; for Jacob said that his men were all of them temperate, except, of course, that unlucky Dutchman, who had gone down to prepare fodder and grain to be brought up in the night, and on whose shoulders Sam put all the blame of concealing whiskey! At any rate, Pete fell asleep, as well he might, after the toils of the two days and nights which he had borne in so stalwart a manner.

Jacob Hetherington had grave anxieties. He appreciated Barton's critical condition. It was not possible in this place to render him such service as he instantly needed. He determined, therefore, to get him down to his father's house as soon as possible. As a first step, he set to work to learn whether the rebel army had left the neighborhood and cleared the pass. It was but a mile across from his cattle camp to the pass through which Lee's army were retreating. The stream whose course Pete had followed did not run at right angles with the pass, but, after being followed a half mile back, it came from the right and ran nearly parallel with the road, so that, though Pete had travelled several miles, the point which he reached was not more than a mile from the road. On a careful reconnoissance, Jacob concluded that it would not be safe to venture down much before sundown. As Ewell did not leave the lines before Gettysburg till about noon of that day, his corps still stretched along the roads and were now entering the defile.

A little before sundown, Pete was roused from sleep into a state of waking bewilderment. He seemed to have forgot every thing and every body, and was in a maze of wonder at his strange surroundings.

The sight of Barton restored his consciousness, and he gradually came to his recollections. A rude litter had been constructed Halter ropes and odd straps were woven back and forth as a sub stitute for a canvas bottom. A rough blanket was laid upon it, and Barton laid thereon. The two black servants carried him the first part of the descent, and then, they returning to their charge, Jacob and Pete took their places. When they reached the cleared fields it was dusk. Avoiding the roads, Jacob, who knew the whole region familiarly, moved across lots, by ways both nearer and more obscure. It was full dark when they entered the avenue leading up to the wide-faced stone house where Paul Hetherington lived. As they entered the dwelling, the change seemed to Pete like a translation from purgatory to heaven. Paul Hetherington stepped forward,—a tall man, strongly built, with a large face, long between the mouth and eyebrows, (as every grand face must be,) a high and wide brow, but wider than high, hair—now changing color—worn long, an eye that was blue when he was calm, but gray when it kindled; and, altogether, such a fine, large man as would, in any company, excite admiration and respect.

His face testified by its texture to right living; by its whole frame and shape to largeness of nature; by its eye and brow to sagacity and thoughtfulness; by its mouth to a suppressed humorousness. Here was stuff for a statesman. He might have been an archbishop. Had he been a general, his very presence would have been worth half an army. He might have made any thing. He was only a Quaker. Yet one could not help saying:

"What a pity that such a man should have no sphere worthy of his nature!"

The proper reply would have been:

"What a happy land that can afford to have such men for private citizens!"

Martha Hetherington, his wife, about fifty-five years of age, was the very and proper wife for Paul Hetherington. She was of rather full habit; yet her face was pale, but not cadaverous. Every feature was shaped finely, and yet the whole face conveyed the impression of largeness rather than fineness.

She was not handsome, though every feature was good. There was a sort of independence in the members of her face. Each feature, as it were, kept house for itself. But that harmony and sympathy which was originally denied to the physical form of her countenance had gradually been supplied by the expression which, year by year, crept over it. One would be apt to say

"That is the handsomest homely face that I ever saw." Three children blessed their household. Jacob was the youngest, and the only son. The eldest daughter was like her mother, and had married and settled in life; the other, resembling her father, was living at home. Two other daughters there had been, but they were no longer living.

While we are telling you all these things, you may be sure they were not standing still, listening to their own praises. The best room was always prepared. Into a bed, whose linen shone like snow, Barton was laid by the strong arms of Paul the father and Jacob the son.

The room opened out of the family room, and so was the very room for sickness, which loves to be cheered by hearing the soft sounds of family life without being in their very midst.

CHAPTER LV

THE SURPRISE.

It is not given to all birds alike to soar high or to continue long upon the wing. The wing must be shapely, the muscle must be ample, the nerve strong, if a bird is to hang long in the air without weariness. Small birds, with short and blunt wings, are always near the ground. Quails and partridges, grouse and woodcock love the earth, and run upon the ground with more delight than they fly in the air. Therefore their enemies easily find them and their nests—the rat, the weasel, the polecat, and the swine, and other hunters many. Small birds, seed-eating,—finches, sparrows, thrushes,—build low and fly low. Their courses are neither wide nor daring. They hop along the twigs in hedges, or hover, giggling and simple-hearted, in low-branched trees. In fence-rows, cats lurk for them. In the woods, small hawks, blue-jays, and shrikes devour them. Even darkness does not cover them from the goggle-eyed owl, whose soft wings are as noiseless as death. Then come bolder birds, that seldom descend below the tops of forests, that live high up above mousing enemies and are more familiar with the sun than with the shade. And higher than all are the long-winged birds, that hang over the ocean, that beat about in storms,—gulls; petrels. Or, still higher, falcons, condors, eagles,—that brood upon the sunlight and lie upon the mere air as if it were water under their breasts and they were fowl swinging on the sea. In these glorious solitudes they live secure. Noises never rise so high; storms and thunder sound below them. The sun comes earlier to them, and lingers later. Their days are longer. There are no fences there parcelling out the great domain. No trees or forests shadow the empyrean; no mountains divide it, nor rivers water it. Only the Sun himself inhabits there—solitary, though the father of multitudes,—dropping down showers of light, which he does not see, and giving life to infinite broods that never knew, nor are known of their father, who through ages is giving and forgetting, begetting and forsaking, creating and devouring. And yet, no wing was ever framed that could soar forever. The gull at last alights. The falcon builds a nest, and seeks it. The eagle has a home among the rocks. Only man's thoughts rise highe than the eagle's wing, higher than the sun, and walk in the celestial city, where is no night, nor weariness, nor sorrow. But even Faith itself may not always abide in these high delights. The heart must come back to its nest.

Through all of Sunday, Rose Wentworth soared up above al rouble. The sun went down without bringing darkness to her But, on the sixth, while the camps were waking up, and Meade dilatory army began to creep out in pursuit, Rose chanced, somewhat after mid-day, to meet Col. Frank Esel, who was hurrying forward to overtake his regiment.

"Miss Wentworth—a thousand blessings on you! I knew th you hovered somewhere about here. General Cathcart told me of your presence. By the way, you have heard that he was wounded and taken?"

"I heard that he had fallen—that he was dead!"

"Dead, Miss Wentworth? dead? Upon my word, you're mistaken! it must be a false report. I was not far from him in the fight. I saw him go in, and he and a dozen more men were gobbled up. But he was alive, and wounded, and a prisoner—I know; for several of the men escaped during the night, who saw him within Lee's lines, and, though little able to walk, yet he was not apparently wounded dangerously."

If Rose had been caught up by a whirlwind, or swept down in the current of the over-full Rock creek, she could not have been more whirled about and helpless than she was at this astounding news.

"Not dead!—not dead!—alive?—a prisoner?—alive! Oh, do not say such things! It cannot be! Alive?—alive? O my soul, be still! Do not believe it!"

"Cousin Rose," said Esel, moved by the intensity of her manner, "I do truly assure you that Barton is alive, unless something has befallen him since he reached the enemy's lines. He was alive and not dangerously wounded on Saturday, that I certainly know; and there is no reason to think that harm has befallen him since. I truly wish you joy, and am heartily glad to surprise you with such good news. God bless you, my dear cousin," and with that he put spurs to his horse and disappeared.

Rose stood like one dreaming. Then she started, as if to go to her patients. Suddenly she stopped and turned to go after Agate. Then, with another sudden change, she started to find her father. All her settledness of heart was gone. She had fallen down out of the clouds to her nest quite near to the ground, and began to experience those gusts and whirls of feeling which sweep the lower levels of human life. While she was thus going first to the right and then to the left, Hiram Beers met her.

"Well, Miss Rose, what's up? You look flustered like. I hope you ain't takin' on 'bout Barton, 'cause that won't do no good. We must all die. You know what the catechism says—'Xerxes did die, and so must you and I.' It's a fact, and can't be helped. But I dew feel bad, after all. I tell you Rose, there ain't many left that's equal to Barton."

"Hiram, Barton is not dead! Col. Esel says that he was seen in Lee's camp, wounded and a prisoner."

"Well, now, that's wuth hearin'," said Hiram, greatly excited, but holding in every sign of it, as if it was a sin to show his feelings. "But it's a pity to feel bad for nothin', I swow; if I hain't cried every time I've thought on't, and now it's just so many tears throwed away! Well, well, I vum, but it's jolly! that is, supposin' it's true."

"Hiram, you must go with me to Agate Bissell. Barton must not be left thus. Something must be done immediately for his release."

The glad tidings spread joy in the little band. Agate spoke not a word. She stood firmly, listened to every syllable, her face shining brighter with each confirmation, and then stepping aside, with her face toward the woods, she stood for a while in prayer of thanksgiving. At length, lifting her apron for a handkerchief and wiping her eyes, she came back to Rose, with an intensity of feeling that seldom escaped her, and put her arms about her and kissed her forehead—"Rose, it is the Lord that slayeth, and the Lord maketh alive. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Alice was certainly glad, but joy had but poor chance in her heart. Like plants that grow under shade trees, it came up pale and feeble, and could not blossom into laughter.

"Agate," said Rose, "what shall be done? Will you look after my men? I can do nothing further until I have released Barton?"

"Child, what can you do? You must wait."

"What will waiting do? Is he not even now moving down towards those hideous Southern prisons? It were better to have died outright, under the bright sun, than to mould, and decay, and die piecemeal, in those dens of cruelty. No, I will this instant find General Meade."

"Headquarters is moved," said one of the men; "the gineral has gone."

"But I can overtake him."

"Rose," said Agate, "you are wild. What could General Meade do, if you did see him? Can he stop his army to go after one man? I guess he's got something else to think of."

"But I could get a pass to the enemy's lines—I could see General Lee!"

"Why, Rose," said Agate, rebukingly, "this is downright craziness." And then in a pitying tone—"I don't blame you, though; and if any thing could be done, I'd encourage it."

"Standing here, and seeing all the difficulties but none of the favorable chances, will not help Barton. It is no common case, and will admit of no common action. I will go to him. There is not storm enough in the sky, nor water enough in the river," said Rose, looking on the turbulent stream below her, "to hinder me. Every thing will help me; every thing will give way to that courage which fills my soul. God is in me. I know that this purpose is not of man! He who kept Barton in the battle will keep me."

Agate was more convinced by Rose's appeal to God and her declaration of her trust in him than by any thing presented to her reason. The evidences of piety were more to her than the evidences of her own judgment.

"Rose, if God has called you to this work I don't doubt that he will open the way. But you ought to examine your heart and know whether you are following your own affections! And, though we trust to Providence, it should always be in the use of means. Now, let us sit down and see what can be done."

"I can go to General Meade's headquarters, and procure a letter which will give me access to General Lee."

"Tut, tut—that won't do—never in the world. Barton is in Virginia before this time, and Lee can't help him if he wants to ever so much."

"Then I will go to Virginia. I will find his prison."

"Suppose you did—you could not storm the prison. They wouldn't let you in nor Barton out. It's pretty much as they say in Richmond about such things, I guess."

"Then I'll go to Richmond. I will see every man in authority. Agate, you need not discourage me. There is that within my heart that will make my way. I will rescue Barton, or I will die in the endeavor! I can do any thing but stay here!"

It was now about the middle of the afternoon. The conference was broken up by an unexpected event. Just as Agate was about to reply to Rose, in came Pete Sawmill, making two or three jumps which a deer might envy, and then, in a transport of rude delight, he tumbled over and over, and rolled on the ground, as an extremely merry and jolly dog will do who finds his feelings far too great to be expressed by the mere wagging of his tongue at one end or his tail at the other.

When at last he had reduced his superabundant excitement to a more governable state, Pete informed the party that Barton had escaped; that he had got him safely into good quarters; that he had come over in a wagon after a surgeon; that he had luckily stumbled on Dr. Wentworth, who was promptly going back with him; and that the doctor thought a nurse had better go out too.

Rose said to Agate:

"Do you not see that I was led? The Lord's hand has been in all this strange work."

"His name be praised!" said Agate, whisperingly.

Paul Hetherington had brought Pete over, taking care at the same time to fill his wagon with such comforts for the wounded as he could provide. Jacob Hetherington remained at home to superintend the descent of the cattle and horses from the mountain fastnesses. Paul excused the indifferent quality of his team by explaining that his best horses were hidden away. They rode briskly away from Gettysburgh, and across the very ground which was yesterday held by Lee's rear guard. As they proceeded, Pete pointed them to a field with scattering shade trees in it.

"There 'twas. There's where I found the gineral, under that tree, fast asleep."

Along the road were marks of the haste with which Ewell had retreated. Broken wagons, dead animals, muskets, knapsacks were strewn along the ways.

The sixth corps of Meade's army had closely followed, and were yet lying near Fairfield, somewhat impeding the journey to Hetherington's house. When once fairly on the road, Dr. Wentworth, who had not before seen Rose for more than a few moments, said:

"I thought it likely that Agate Bissell would come; but I am glad that she sent you, Rose. I have hardly seen you for a moment."

"I needed no sending, father. No one would have been permitted to go to Barton but me. It is my errand."

And with that she drew from her bosom Barton's letter, and gave it to her father to read.

Dr. Wentworth read it through—read it a second time. In spite of himself the tears came to his eyes. He put his arm gently and fondly round his daughter, and said, in a whisper:

"I suppose you go to answer this, Rose?"

"Father, if he only lives—if God will but spare us——"

And with that she laid her head upon her father's breast and burst into tears, and wept violently, and almost convulsively. It was well. After such high and long-continued strain nature demanded relief. Rose had come down out of the high and bright clouds, and walked upon the ground again, a woman, full of hopes and fears, of weakness and tears.

Paul Hetherington sat with Pete on the front seat. I do not believe he looked around once. If one had watched, it might, possibly, have been seen that his large and grave face was slightly inclined, so that the merest glance of Rose's agitation, and her father's protecting caress, might have entered his eye; but he turned his face square towards his horses, and sat immovable till they drove up the avenue of venerable old cherry trees which lined the way from the road to the house, trees that now hung full of ripe cherries and red robins. The fruit was over abundant. The sun, lying low, was shining aslant through the trees, and filling them with a kind of golden vapor. They seemed to be tabernacles for birds. Catbirds miawed and jerked their tails nervously, robins breathed a low *pympf*, or were wholly silent; cedar birds, jays, brown thrushes, and numberless other fruit loving birds, fluttered and flew as the wagon went on, coming back again the instant it had passed, as waters open and shut to the passage of a ship.

"I think, sir," said Dr. Wentworth, "that the boys don't stone the birds in these grounds."

"Nay, the only stones which I allow to be thrown are cherry-stones. Thou art aware, doubtless, that music hath little place among Friends; but it is brought to us, even as the prophet's food was, upon wings."

The dwelling-house, of dark gray stone, now stood out plainly. It did not stretch up ambitiously, but lay broad upon the ground, having the expression, not only of roominess, but of hospitality. Every door had a coaxing look, and each window said, Come in. One might search in vain for a stick, a chip, a shaving, or a straw, all around the house. Absolute order and neatness was written upon the face of things. Every gate stood up straight. Every stone in every wall was true to a line. Nothing seemed to have ever fallen down; nothing was ever dropped. The very winds did not dare to send the leaves upon the grass. The garden on the right held out its bright blossoms, and marshalled its rows of culinary vegetables, without a weed or a withered stalk.

To Rose, who had so long been used to the rudest scenes, and to the very paradise of disorder, the excessive neatness on every hand produced something of the impression of fine art. But little time they had for outward observations.

Martha Hetherington stood in the open porch, the door wide open behind her.

"Thee is welcome home, Paul. The young man needs thy friends. I fear, Doctor, thee has come on a poor errand. Alight! Is this his sister?" said Martha, turning to Rose.

"It is my daughter," said Dr. Wentworth.

Paul, however, explained it with his eye. One look sufficed· and Martha tenderly helped Rose from the wagon, and gave he in charge to her comely daughter.

"Rose?" said Martha.

Two voices answered, one saying:

"What, mother?" and the other, "What, ma'am?"

Martha Hetherington smiled. "Is thy name Rose?"

"Rose Wentworth!"

"And this is Rose Hetherington. Surely ye should like each other?"

Dr. Wentworth went at once to Barton's bedside. He found him in a low and sinking condition. Before making more close examination, he gave him more ample stimulants, together, also, with opium, which had not been administered; and the stimulants only in a gradual manner.

"For fear," Martha said, "of producing fever."

"That is the only way to attack fever—such fever as he is liable to," said the doctor.

Strong beef-tea was prepared for him, and every means of restoring his ebbing strength was used.

"Had this wound upon the abdomen been deep, he would have died before this,—let's see: Saturday night, Sunday night, Monday night,—forty-eight hours. Had the intestines been sundered, he would have died within twenty-four hours. Should there be an inflammation of the peritoneum, I should fear, in his exhausted condition, that he could not stand up under it. Should there be only a local inflammation and the suppuration of the wound itself, there will be hope."

It was uncertain whether Barton was conscious of the presence of his friends or not. He lay with half-closed eyes, either dreaming or carrying on a fevered process of thought. No groans escaped him, but sometimes sighs. Rose stood by him, outwardly calm. But who shall unroll that which filled her heart, as she gazed upon Barton's bloodless face, and his brow whiter than snow, from which fell back his black hair? His face was thin. His features were sharp. The whole face looked old. As Rose gazed upon him, she momently expected him to speak. She wondered how they could be so near, and yet so utterly separated. She would have given worlds for one look, for one word of recognition. After all this history of his love for her, should he now at length die, knowing nothing of that deep treasure of her heart!—die by her very side, and know it not!—die while her words were in his ears, and his hand in hers, and yet not know their meaning!

How terrible is the thunder—how more terrible is the crash of battle! Yet neither of them is so awful as the measured cadence of one who tells us that our beloved are walking away from us, along the road of the dying!

Dark is the night; but what night so dark as that of love hopelessly watching? How deep is the unexplorable sea! But far deeper is that night which Hope sounds with line of fear—sounds, but can find no bottom!

CHAPTER LVI.

THE QUAKER HOME.

COMPARED with the labors of the past two days, the anxieties and excitement of Barton's case, brought home so closely to him by the knowledge of Rose's feelings, seemed to Dr. Wentworth like rest. But in a perfectly healthy constitution food may become a partial substitute for sleep, and enable one to go for many days in continuous activity. It was not poetical, under all the circumstances, for Dr. Wentworth to go out to Martha Hetherington's table that evening with a supreme appetite. It was, however, a fact. Nor was the proverbial good housewifery of the Friends put to shame by the ample supper, by the glowing neatness, the exquisite simplicity of every arrangement. After somewhat satisfying the more urgent craving of appetite, Dr. Wentworth could not help saying:

"I am trying to see what it is that renders your table so beautiful, without ornament. I have always esteemed the family table to be a kind of altar, a place sacred and so to be made as complete in its finishings as may be. The act of eating is itself one of the lowest. But society has thrown around it such thorough associations of affection and social enjoyment that we scarcely perceive the going on of the very thing for which the table was spread. That a refined and delicate person has been talking, or sympathetically changing countenance while others talk, we remember, but not that she has been eating. But, if you will excuse the remark, something in your table strikes me most agreeably. There are, I perceive, degrees in neatness."

His host replied:

"Our customs disallow ostentatiousness, but enjoin order and neatness. That is the one channel through which the imagination has play. Music is not in vogue with us. Our amusements are grave and frugal. We do not choose to expose our young people to dangerous vanities by the use of colors, that so largely enter into the fascinations of the world's people. It is not strange that neatness should become much in our hands, since we are obliged to express by it all that the world's people do by forms and colors and sounds."

"Ah, I see;--like the blind man, whose ears make up by acuteness something of the lost sense. One might expect far more to be made of neatness when the whole imagination is concentrated upon it, than if the taste were distributed through many channels.'

"High colors and brilliant garments," said Hetherington, "do not harmonize with spiritual states. Colors bring the mind down toward matter. As our thoughts reach into the realm of holiness, they instinctively dispossess all objects of color. We never imagine angels in blue, or red, or yellow, but always in white."

"But God made flowers," said Wentworth; "he colored the woods, he fashioned clouds, and spanned the rainbow, and made gorgeous sunsets."

"True; all these are of the earth—earthly. They are not to be disesteemed, since the Creator's hand hath fashioned them. But they are not the symbols of holiness, or of spiritual elevation. Useful things are not alike good for all things. Colors are for the world and its objects, but pure white for the saints."

"Since you and your children are in the world, and not in the spirit-land, colors, methinks, might be suffered," replied the doctor.

"Nay. They who aim at the estate of the just and the blessed are much helped by keeping before them evermore the emblems of purity. There is need in this world of every help. Simplicity, silence, and a soul open to the invisible light, are chiefest means of grace. Some seek religion through gorgeous ceremonies, by which the senses are made drunk, and the conscience stumbles into idolatry; some by ordinances that usurp the place of God and truth, and become a snare; some by forms of worship, and noisy services of music and ritual. All these rouse up the sensuous nature. The spirit is veiled by them. They hinder and exclude the pure light of divine truth, even as upon windows the fantastic forms and colors which men's hands have painted there throw back upon their makers their own fancies, but keep out the light of God's sun."

"I conceive your view to be largely true," said Dr. Wentworth, "and important. But it is partial, in that such abstraction is possible only to highly-organized minds. In your way, may you not fall into the same error that the greatest thinkers in my own church have? That conception of holiness which was easy to Jonathan Edwards, because he was a poet and an ethical genius, was impossible to men of slender intellect, of no imagination, and of a penurious moral sense. In this unconscious way great natures oppress the weak. It is putting children to the stride of the giant. It is like teaching conic sections and the calculus in primary schools. Men are taught to feel guilt for not possessing religious experiences which they are no more capable of than Mrs. Hemans was of Milton's poetry, or Tupper of Homer's epics."

Hetherington paused, as if considering the matter, and after a little resumed:

"There is much to be considered in thy words. Nevertheless, the things which men cannot perform teach them far more than the things which they can easily do. The whole world pulls at the body, and will have it an animal. Therefore the heavens must draw upon the spirit. What if Jacob could not climb the ladder whose top was in heaven? It taught him a lesson. It connected the very stones under his head with the clouds above him, and taught him that there was a way, unseen by mortal eyes, from the lowest thing to the highest."

At last Dr. Wentworth had found his man! Of a nature as large as his own, reared from a standpoint half round the circle from his, and so antipodal; sympathetic and hospitable to others' thoughts, loving rather to think with and compare thoughts than to dispute; capable of seeing things from other people's grounds, and of suspecting what was the absolute truth whose partial revelations organized sects in the world; sincere, earnest, deep, patient, not anxious to parade his thoughts; sensitive to any confidence which might subject to controversy and defilement the silent sanctuary of the soul where God revealed, if not the truth, yet mighty premonitions of it; carrying an undisclosed life of meditation concerning the whole mystery of human life, and the hope of the life to come; heartily in sympathy with his own sect, yet not believing it to be more than a sect; a repressed, loving nature, but loving goodness and nobleness rather than the common things in human nature; and, above all, believing in God, and therefore not accepting the golden dust-specks of the sects as the whole mine, but grandly waiting, and willing, with large content, to wait the day when death should spring up into Being, Power, Purity Knowledge.

Both of these men were loyal to their sect, but larger. Like vines planted in a garden, they covered the walls, overtopped them, and climbed into the neighboring trees, bearing as much fruit in the great common highway as in the garden. Such men are sometimes called unbelievers, because they believe so much more than others.

Great souls know each other. Years are the servitors of slower natures, and nurse them into mutual confidence. There are certain touches that fine natures know instantly, conclusive of all the rest, the free-masonry of the sons of God!

What was sleep compared with such communion? It was long past midnight before they separated, who never separated in all their after lives! And in those hours, alone, in confidence, unobstructed by a fear, they spoke of the deep things of life, and moved together over realms and royalties of meditation where each had so often passed, a solitary traveller!

Rose Wentworth would fain have watched by Barton's side all night, but her father forbade, and enjoined sleep.

"I am not weary, father: I *cannot* sleep if I lie down."

"That is the very reason why you should not watch any longer. The long tension of care, and your deep anxiety concerning Barton, have wrought a super-excitement, which, if it goes on, will be dangerous. You *must* sleep, and here are the means of procuring it," at the same time preparing for her an opiate. "Your hands are cold, your head hot; you should put your feet into hot water for ten minutes, and then take this."

In the morning Barton was no worse; and "That is a gain," said the doctor. "If when I return to-night there is no sign of peritoneal excitement, and his strength is kept up, I shall have hope. But he will graze so near, that if he would only look over he might see death."

The sun was rising when Pete appeared with a stylish mare, to take the doctor back to Gettysburg. Rose still slept. It was ten o'clock before she appeared, and even then, for a while, the lethargic cloud hung over her.

If Paul Hetherington had found a friend in Dr. Wentworth, so his wife had found a favorite in his daughter. Martha seldom mistook in judging people whom she met. If any thing, she was slightly inclined to judge less favorably than her husband; but, then, on that account she was oftener right. People helped her, and made her abated judgments true. When, therefore, she took Rose at once to her heart, it was a compliment which Rose did not as well understand as did Martha's own family.

Little could be done for Barton. He was either unconscious or wandering in mind. Martha drew Rose from him as much as possible. She must show her the spring-house.

"What is that?" said Rose, pointing to a queer stack of bricks under a tile shed close by the house.

"That is our oven," said Martha.

"What—out of doors? We build ours into the kitchen chimney."

"It is the way of our fathers. The other perhaps is more convenient."

They walked a few rods upon a path of flat stones, carefully laid down, and kept free from weeds and grass. Indeed they were more like the pavement of a hall than an out-of-doors walk. It led to a low stone house, on the edge of a slight dell. The gables of the roof came over so far as to form a cover to the door. A small room full of the smell of butter and milk first met them. If the house had seemed clean to Rose, what should she think of this work-room in the spring-house? Its maple-wood bowls, the white-wood dishes, the beech-wood ladles and scoops, the pine tables and benches, the blue ash floor, seemed to live in an intense rivalry with each other which should be cleanest. The tubs dreaded lest the pails should get an extra scour; the wooden spoons bellied up with all the conscious pride of the spoon family, thanking God that they were red and not white, being made of the heart-wood of the beech. The oak bench looked steadily over every day in hopes of spying a speck on the white pine table, and the table was tickled whenever it could spill something on the floor that would spoil its ridiculous conceit of its own exceeding whiteness.

"What is that?" said Martha Hetherington, with more animation than belonged to that enforced tranquillity which she usually bore—"What is that? Verily it is a fly! That silly girl, Polly, has left the door ajar, or some of these nettings are moved in the windows."

The fly buzzed and bolted out of the opened door as suddenly as a heretic from before a bench of bishops, or a thief from the face of a magistrate.

"He knew that he had no business here, the guilty thing That fly lies in wait, I sometimes think, and when I come he always disappears; but when Polly comes, he presumes on her heedlessness. Twice before, this summer, Polly left the door open, and I found that fly here."

Rose was delighted with this excessive neatness, the very brilliance of cleanness.

"How can you contrive to be so remarkably neat? I never saw any thing like it in my life."

"Ah, child, I wish thee might have seen my mother's spring-house! That *was* clean. But she was *naturally* neat. It is but an acquired virtue with me!"

A door opened out of this room into the spring-chamber. The cool air and the creamy smell came up out of it, to Rose's great delight. Descending a few stone steps, Rose saw, laid in solid cement, stone canals or troughs running around the whole base; and, at about three feet above them, another series of like construction, supported upon iron brackets let into the side walls. Into these spring-water, gushing up from the rock within the chamber itself (which had been built over a strong and unfailing spring), flowed with a gentle motion through all the troughs, and made its exit on the farther side. Into this living water the pans of milk were set. A part of the pans were glass, and a part silver. At any rate, if they were not silver, they were tin polished to such brightness as Rose never saw before. The names of twenty-five cows hung above their respective contributions. Here were "Crumple," "Brindle," "Queen," "Violet," "Daisy," "Sukey," "Blackface," "Fawn," "Cherry," and all the other honored names of the barn-yard.

Next, they went to the barn. Such a sight Rose had never seen. It seemed to her eyes more like a vast mansion. It was built of stone, three stories, besides the cellars. Built upon a side-hill, the topmost story was on the level of the upper ground; while side-hill roads, at different elevations, led into each lower story. The mows for hay, now well nigh empty, made Rose dizzy to look down into. They were vast enough to hold hay for the "cattle on a thousand hills." The grain-room, the root-cellars, the straw-sheds, the mill-room—where, by water-power, roots and hay were cut and grains ground; the harness, and wagon, and tool rooms—seemed like parts of a city rather than of a barn, to her eye, accustomed only to the snug and small barns of New England. Every where, glass windows, with external shutters, were provided. The wood-work was painted as in a dwelling-house. Besides the barn proper, there were lean-tos, sheds, sheep-barns, straw-barns, cattle-sheds, a horse-barn, and colt-pens,—until Rose was fairly bewildered! Water flowed everywhere, spilt over nowhere. In one corner, the water spurted from no one could tell where, into a stone tank; and, overflowing, disappeared—no one could see how. There was water for each cattle-yard, for the sheep-yard, for the colt-yard. No half-rotten barrels, nor leaking wooden troughs were seen up to their knees in puddles of their own making. Every thing was stone. The water came in an orderly manner, sparkled and dimpled in a quiet and orderly way, gravely moved off again, and decorously disappeared. It was good Quaker water, and neither sung, nor danced, nor wore profane bubbles.

Nothing could have been more soothing and restful to Rose. Nor was the excitement suffered to slacken. All day long, were coming down from the mountains the returning horses, cows, and oxen. They were overjoyed to be released. They showed as much excitement in returning to their homes as if they were children just coming home in vacation. They ran around the yards, they drank at the stone tanks, or horned each other away; they smelt of the walls and gates, and moved about with a curious excitement, which surely must have answered in them—in a low and rudimentary way—to the affections and domestic local attachments of human creatures.

Even more exhilarated were the horses. It was deemed best to bring both cattle and horses into yards and barns, for a few days, before giving them their old pasture grounds. To be sure, the rebel army was gone, but the loyal army were not wholly unversed in the distributive duties of the quartermaster's department. The day passed slowly away. Rose anxiously waited her father's return.

He came at about dark, but could give little comfort.

"It is well, thus far. But we are in the dark respecting this last wound. It is not safe to probe it. We cannot know the extent of the injury internally. It may be trifling. It may be serious to the last degree. We can only wait the development of the case. If, in a week's time, no other dangerous symptoms occur, Barton is safe. Meanwhile, it is necessary that his system should be held firmly under the influence of opium, and his strength be kept up with nourishment and stimulants."

These were days of weariness and of trial far more severe to Rose than all the watching and service of the hospital. All sweet excitements nourish the body, and increase the strength upon which they draw. But acerb excitements, in which half-hopeless fear plays at battledore and shuttlecock with courage, soon fever the soul with anxious suspense; and suspense, above all other elements, is the very poison of the mind. Rose would gladly have stayed by Barton's side every moment. But Martha Hetherington would not suffer it. The watch was divided between the three. Little there was to be done.

Barton remained quite unconscious of what was going on. Whether it was the disturbance of the brain by the inflammation of his wounds, or whether it was the opium, or, more probably, both conjoined,—he gave no sign of recognition. Sometimes he would lie with wide open eye and mutter half-audible sentences, which seemed to be fragmentary orders to his men. But it was like a trance or sleep-walking. He took notice of no questions—he seemed looking into some distant place, and to be separated wholly from the persons and events around him.

The two Roses—Rose Wentworth and Rose Hetherington—came together as naturally as two drops of dew. They had the true conditions of friendship. They were unlike, and yet both were true-hearted and deeply imbued with moral sentiment. Love whose roots do not reach down to the religious feeling can not be rich or enduring, it is a summer herb—not a shrub or tree able to seek its many summers through many winters. They wandered together, talked much, communed much, and began, before they separated, to love much. The Quaker woman had looked at life from a side so new to Rose that she attributed the freshness and novelty to some originality of disposition in her friend. On the other hand, the Yankee woman amazed her more simple friend by her knowledge of literature, of art, and of the great outside world.

With true delicacy, all questions were forborne in regard to Rose's relations to Barton. Every one in the household, of course, knew that there was love between them. But the mother, the daughter, the father left Rose to her own liberty of silence or speech, just as it should please her. Rose loved to go at evening, when the cows were brought from pasture, and the men or women milked them. One must have been little conversant with country life, or very deficient in sentiment, who does not know the enjoyments which may found in barns and their surroundings,—among them is the smell of grain or hay, the pleasure of watching the faces and manners of spirited horses, the peculiar restlessness and almost motherliness belonging to the large-eyed, good-natured, cud-chewing cow. Then there were wrens chattering in the most vixenish way, and swallows gliding in and out, like snatches of black sunbeams—if there were such things,—and doves that went flapping up from the ground to the roof, and then, from some invisible impulse, discharged themselves into the air, and flew headlong toward some distant field; then, changing their minds, wheeled about—some bolting right up in the air, some dividing to the right or to the left; and then, all of them streaming headlong back to the roof again, circling round and round, as if it were hot—a dozen dropping down, and the rest swinging once more round the barn, where at last all alight, save one, which flies off to another building; the rest won't go to him—and so, after a little, he comes to them, and then they run after each other—crooning and strutting, for all the world, as if they were human beings, in gay society, instead of being the simple, innocent doves that they are. One could find simple delight in watching such scenes for hours. Rose found them tranquillizing, too, from the contrast with the cruel scenes to which she had so long been used. She compared the doves to cavalry, and laughed at the ludicrous dissemblance.

But, with all that was winning in nature, and all that was delightful to Rose in this great Quaker farm, so utterly unlike any that she had ever seen, the time hung heavily upon her hands, and anxiety wore upon her heart.

At length, upon Sunday, Dr. Wentworth, after considering

Barton's whole condition, pronounced him decidedly convalescent The opiates were no longer needed. It was a day of intense excitement to Rose. When will the stupor pass away? Will his mind come out of this eclipse? Oh! what will he think when he first recognizes me? The hours passed on. Rose would not leave the room. It was noon, and Barton was very quiet. The middle of the afternoon came. A mortal fear stole over her. His mind may be permanently affected! His sufferings and hardships may have overstrained his brain! Hours passed on. Rose stood by the window. The sun was descending behind the mountain. It poured down a flood of light over all the fields near and far Long shadows mimicked the shapes of all things and turned them into burlesque. Through the half-opened shutters the light streamed into the room. It fell across the bed, and flashed upon the pale face of the sick man, who stirred, opened his eyes, that no longer stared, but seemed full of meaning. Rose came instantly to his side. She sat silently gazing. Barton turned his eyes upon her in a wondering, troubled way. Rose kneeled by his side, every feeling retreating to her heart, as if to stop its beating. Barton closed his eyes, as if to shut out a phantom.

"Barton, do you know me? Do you know your Rose?"

He unclosed his eyes, and in a weak and feeble manner put his hands to his eyes, as if to brush away films that were misleading his sight.

He put his hand timidly out, to touch her, as if to make sure whether it was an illusion or a reality. His hand was clasped in both of hers. She leaned toward him. He felt her kiss upon his brow. Slowly and with difficulty he spoke:

"Is—this—Rose?—my Rose?—I mean ——"

"Yes, Barton,—your own Rose; you *will* live, Barton—oh, Barton, live! live!" She spoke with an intensity full of anguish, for a moment letting go restraint.

He lay silent. His eyes were closed. In his weakness he could not keep the tears back that would break from under his eyelids. After a moment's pause, Barton raised his eyes to Rose with a look of utter imploring, as if he would say,—"Do not let me be deceived, nor send me back again to hopelessness."

Her eyes were full of gladness and love, if one could have seen them behind Rose's tears.

"God has been very gracious to us both, Barton. He has brought us together, and nothing shall ever divide us again."

Seeing how greatly he was agitated, though with joy, Rose, though her soul longed for utterance and would have poured a tide of golden sentences into his willing ear, refrained, from fear of injury, saying:

"Barton! my own, and forever my own! you are too weak—we must neither of us speak more now."

He strove to lift his head—he would have put his arm about her. His languid eyes were yet full of wonder and joy. With an ineffable smile Rose restrained him.

"No, Barton, you must mind me a little while;" and then, in a tone yet lower and sweeter, "If you love me, Barton—if still you love me—" She had no need to finish the sentence, and did not, for some puff of wind threw back the shutter, and the whole tide of sunlight streamed across the bed and fell upon Barton and upon Rose, with so sudden an illumination that Rose, in her high-wrought joy, looking full into the sun, said—"It is the blessing of God! We are accepted of Him, Barton! and nothing shall put us asunder!"

But why need we linger with these lovers through the long weeks of Barton's recovery, made short by the joys of love?

Oh, those mountain hours! those days of July! From morning to evening, moments sped as bubbles on a mountain stream, that come, reflect all the light of heaven, burst with ecstasy, and are followed by other bubbles, gaily dancing to the music of the stream. Little medicine do they need whose souls are radiant with joy! Love was more than medicine and better than food!

CHAPTER LVII

THE ELM TREE.

Two years went by. The war had ended. Lee had laid down his arms, and Johnston had capitulated. One by one, the scattered fragments of the Confederate army had surrendered, or dispersed. Barton Cathcart had returned home and laid aside his stars and sword. He had, after the wounds healed and his strength returned, joined his corps again. He had fought through the murderous tangle of the Wilderness, hammered at the entrenchments of Spottsylvania, flanked the dangerous works upon the North Anna, plunged into the butchery of Cold Harbor, and lay through the sickly autumn and the long winter in the trenches before Petersburg. He had had part in the last grand battles, when they stormed Lee's lines, earned every step by desperate endeavor, and after all found Lee still firm, defiant, desperate. None so well knew the incomparable skill and bravery of that now waning army of Northern Virginia as they who for four years had fought it, and now, in the hour of its supreme disaster, were grinding it to powder rather than forcing its surrender; and when, at length, cut off from his lines of retreat by that lion of the battle-field, whose ramping cavalry lay crouched across his only path, his artillery gone, his trains taken or destroyed, his ammunition expended, his chief officers slain, or wounded, or captured, his men reduced to a handful, overwearied by nights without sleep, and days taxed to the uttermost, Lee yielded his army, General Cathcart, and every other brave man, in their admiration felt that the heroism of that army was the only worthy measure of the perseverance and bravery of the army of the Potomac. In every generous bosom rose the thought—"These are not of another nation, but our citizens." Their mistakes, their evil cause, belonged to the system under which they were reared, but their military skill and heroic bravery belong to the nation, that will never cease to mourn that such valor had not been expended in a better cause, and that the iron pen must write: "The utmost valor misdirected and wasted."

But all this had passed away, and another year besides. It was in October that all Norwood rejoiced in the marriage of Rose and Barton. That wedding shall not be lightly dismissed. After so long and patiently following their history, it would be a slight, indeed, if every one of our readers should not be invited to their wedding! The town made this its own wedding. Every motherly heart in Norwood felt that she had a part in marrying Rose to Barton.

The morning of the 15th of October rose over old Holyoke, not with the fierce fire of July shot straight upon its stony top and woody sides, flushing hot, but with a soft sun, tempered and genial. It had finished the chase of summer. It had triumphed. All the fields of corn yet ungathered, whose loose rows were punctuated with yellow pumpkins; all the reaped fields, all the withered stalks even, bore witness to the sun's victory. October is the month that crowns the sun. Then, he moves through the gorgeous apparel which nature wears, no longer a warrior fierce in battle, but a victor, content with his victories, and every where shedding abroad the tokens of his royal complacency. The days were soft and hazy. Even at noon the lenient sun would not suffer his heat to go forth. Not even frosts excited his displeasure, slyly creeping after his footsteps at night. He reposed all the day upon the gorgeous hills, spread with sumptuous apparel. Trees made love to each other. The chestnut glowed benignantly at the yellow bronzed hickory. The old oaks stood yet in deep green, unchanged. Something made the yellow maples laugh, and something made the scarlet maples blush. The brilliant ampelopsis had climbed into the cedars, and was peeping out to see what it was that nature was whispering and the trees were blushing at. The dew this morning magnified itself, and showed and shook the jewels with which the sun pledged its love. A few birds only showed themselves. They were travelling to a Southern land. They had in mind another summer far away. They tried a single note, but would not sing their ringing love-songs in the broken notes of autumn voices.

Yet not the hills or mountains purpled with color, nor the warm-leaved trees, nor the the winking dew, nor summer-seeking birds, nor the soft and silvery haze that hung upon the morning like a bride's veil, nor the late-coming asters, that would whisper of summer to the very snow, nor the great elm that stood drooping its branches, but lifting high its top in a mighty meditation of grace and beauty—not these, nor whatever else glorifies this bridal wreath of nature, seemed half so sweet to Rose and Barton as did the looks which they gave and took, the low-toned words linked together by silence more full than words.

On the night before this morning so glorious, Rose had said :

" Come early to-morrow, Barton—come very early. I shall walk once more in my favorite paths in the garden before breakfast."

Rose slightly blushed as she added, smiling :

" When the golden gate has once shut upon us, Barton, Rose Wentworth will never be seen on earth again ; so you must be with me in my last minutes."

Barton was silent. After a moment, Rose doubled up her little soft hand, and slowly knocking Barton's brow three times, said, demurely :

" Open sesame—let me in."

" My own ! " said Barton, " I was wishing a wish that I am not ashamed to have, but am almost ashamed to tell."

" Ah, Barton, the time has come when silence is treason. The thoughts which you hide are the most precious. The shells which the sea rolls out on shore are not its best. The pearls have to be dived for. Better pause while you can ! After to-morrow your life is mine. I will be a naiad to every rill in your soul ; and if your heart were deep as the ocean, I will be a sea-nymph, and gather white corals from the very depths, and bring out hidden treasures from its caves ! Begin, then ! Tell me ! "

" O Rose, mine !—the lips are the key of the mouth, and I pledge you now, for my whole life, that yours shall unlock my soul of every secret thought whenever you shall press mine and demand it in love's name."

It was evening twilight. They sat alone in the porch. A few late blossoms of the Chinese honeysuckle shed down a trace of perfume through the air. There were no locusts singing, no katydids, nor gurgling crickets, and yet some soft sounds I certainly heard ? Not birds, surely ! I think it must have been the plash of one honeysuckle blown against another. Yet there is no wind to move them ! I hear it again ! Listen ! It is like the falling of a drop of dew into the silver lake from some birchen leaf! No, that is rude. It is as if two dreams floating in the night had clashed; or like the joining of two prayers of love on their way upward; or—nay, it was a kiss!—pure, sacred, holy! It is the soul's symbol, when words fail it. It is the heart's sigh, or interjection, when it has a feeling for which there is no expression!

A soft cloud had hid the moon. It began to move away. The light shone out again.

"Barton, I do believe you mean not to tell me after all. What is that shame-faced secret!"

"You will smile, I know. But I feel it. I want every one that has been with me in danger and trouble to be present in my great joy to-morrow. Colonel Stanton, who befriended me when I was a prisoner after Bull Run, has come. By the way, the war has well nigh ruined his property, and I have been of help to him in saving a part. The Hetheringtons are all in your house. Rose, my horse, that carries a man's heart in him, that never flinched under fire, that was wounded as well as I, that carried me along the hardest journeys unflagging, and saved me several times from captivity,—I want him near me when I am married. I know that it would to many sound foolish. But no one but a soldier can know a soldier's feeling for a faithful horse!"

"No one but a soldier and a soldier's wife," replied Rose. "You ought to be ashamed of being ashamed of such a feeling. He shall stand in golden shoes, and eat the plumpest oats out of a china vase, if it will please you, Barton!"

"It is only a feeling, but it is as strong as superstition. Of course it is not for his sake, but my own. I shall feel better if he stand in front of the yard where I can see him."

It was time to separate.

"Come early, Barton. I shall take my favorite walk in the morning for the last time, and I would not be alone."

The day broke over the hills, bent evidently on being present at the wedding. It came in golden tresses, and in silver vapors, and infinite jewelry of dew, and it lit up all the world with joy as it came; but Rose and Barton forgot, as they stood in the arbor, that there was any body happy but themselves. Could it be possible that there was any joy left?

Dr. Wentworth was as calm, outwardly, as if only the usual business was going on. His face shone. His voice was lower and richer than usual. His eye carried in it a perpetual benediction.

The great mansion was vocal in every room. Guests were present from the east and west and south. The town swarmed with friends come to the wedding. 'Biah Cathcart renewed his youth, and Rachel's face shone with unexpressed thanksgiving. Hiram Beers was glorious. Why not? As he had gone to Dr. Wentworth's to live, in a neat cottage built expressly for him, and to have full charge of the doctor's stables, barn, and place, why should he not consider this occasion as a family matter?

Pete Sawmill was triumphant. Great was the honor and glory that came back with him to Norwood! The story of his simple affection and fidelity was known to all, and all agreed with Deacon Trowbridge, "that Pete ain't much in the intellects, but he's got a heart as big as an ox." And nobody was surprised to learn that Pete was to live with Barton Cathcart for life; nor that he appeared on this morning with a bran new suit of broadcloth, and that he had a red cord sewed the whole length of the side seams of his pantaloons, and that he wore military buttons on his coat and vest. Pete hankered after these vanities, and it was not believed that, if he was pleased, any body else would be hurt.

Rose had labored long and often with Pete about his besetting sin, with slight amendment of it. His army life had not developed his temperance principles. He was always penitent on such occasions; always promised to do so no more; and he never did—until the next temptation. But one day Pete fairly got it into his head, or heart rather, that his conduct was a grief to Rose—a real sorrow. Instead of expostulating and reasoning with him, as heretofore, Rose on the last occasion had burst into tears.

"Oh, Pete! you behave as if you cared for none of your friends. I am ashamed and grieved to the heart. You have been so long with us, and served the country so nobly, and saved Barton's life, and kept a great grief from us all, and now you have come back to disgrace us. I can't bear it, Pete; I can't bear it;" and Rose's tears fell fast.

Poor Pete was never before conscious of being an object of such special regard that any human being would cry for him. He was very awkwardly distressed for himself. He shuffled his feet and fumbled with his hands, and felt deeply in his pockets for something that was not there—a good resolution, probably—and blubbered and sputtered in the most distressing manner, till the whole contrast was too inexpressibly ludicrous for Rose, who covered her face with her handkerchief, and bit her lips to keep from audible laughter. But to Pete this covering of Rose's face was the last affliction. He thought that he had done some great damage to her, and he exploded in an extraordinary mixture of crying, confession and howling, with promises, which astounded Rose. The poor fellow shook all over, and wrangled his hands and arms about in the air in the most aimless and awkward manner possible, and finally bolted for the door and disappeared. He brought up at Parson Buell's, and stumbled headlong into his study, just as the doctor was writing out his *fifthly*, in the coming sermon.

"I dew wish you'd giv' me somethin'. Dew! if you please! I want to take somethin'."

The doctor thought that he must have taken something too much already. But, after some questioning, Pete broke out in a medley of grief again—quite like that in Rose's presence, but not so excessive.

"I ain't goin' to have no more rum; it's making *her* cry; and I ain't goin' to drink any more rum; and I want you to give me somethin'."

It was evident that Pete was inquiring after the temperance pledge, and the doctor at length became satisfied of the fact. Accordingly, he drew up a pledge, on the largest sheet of paper that he had in his study; and thinking that it might be more striking to Pete's simple eyes, he ruled a band of red ink about the whole, upon which Pete looked much as the Israelites did upon the Red sea, when they first reached it. But it answered the purpose. Pete made his mark, and was faithful to his new promise. A few tears did more for him than much exhortation.

Throughout the great wedding-day, Pete carried himself most becomingly, dividing his attention during the ceremony between Barton and Barton's war-horse. He was much disappointed when Barton, after the ceremony, did not mount and repeat some of the brilliant feats of horsemanship which he had seen him perform. But supposing that, for some good reason, Barton had changed his mind, he led the scarred horse back to his oats.

At noon, when all the company were assembled, and every body was merry, chatting and chattering, all at once the church-bell broke out into the most musical of invitations. To be sure, its duty was to ring at twelve, every day. But any one could tell hat there was more than that in it to-day. Its paternal soul had wedding thought in it. It was no measured, doctrinal ring, fit for Sunday. It was no fearful, funeral ring, thick and heavy. It was a real, out-springing, merry ring, as of a bell that would like to kick up its heels and dance on the green with the best of them.

Before the bell had done ringing, a movement was seen about Dr. Wentworth's mansion. From the front door issued first Dr. Buell and a brother clergyman, then came Dr. and Mrs. Wentworth, and then came Rose and Barton; (while the boys that were peeping into the gate nodded to each other and said, "By George, jest look at that! ain't they bunkum?") and then came Agate Bissell, and all the other members of the family; and after them flocks and crowds of friends. They moved down to the great elm tree, which hung down its paternal arms about them and filled all its top with blessings! There, at length, stood Rose and her husband, under the very flickering shadows and checkered golden light that had amused her when a babe. While Parson Buell prayed, all the birds in the tree-top made responses and said amen! Then there was a moment's pause. There stood the noble pair. By Barton's side, stood Will Belden, on one leg and a crutch. On Rose's side stood Rose Hetherington, "too pretty for any thing," said several young gentlemen near by. Then, in the simple forms of the good old times, the ceremony proceeded; and Parson Buell, at its close, laid his hands upon their heads, bowed to his touch, and blessed them. And they were blessed!

No salutation of mere ceremony followed. Barton turned to Rose with an embrace that seemed like to have merged her into himself. Rose put her arms with full love about her husband. For a second they stood folded, some words they whispered, and there were few dry eyes that looked on them. Even Judge Bacon wiped his eyes, and declared that "It was remarkably good, positively affecting, and so unexpected, too."

There was but one event that befell the party which filled them with astonishment, and that was the sudden and unexpected decease of Agate Bissell. None out of Dr. Wentworth's family even knew that she was ailing, that under a fair appearance a hidden fire was in her heart, that would surely take away her name from among those who had so long known it and loved it.

She had manifested, while Rose's wedding service proceeded, a tremulousness, as of one consciously weak, but who had determined not to give way till Rose was married. But Agate could hold out no longer. Scarcely had Rose received the salutations of her own kindred before her father called her aside and her husband also, and quite a stir and excitement arose among the crowd as Dr. Buell, with some dignity and firmness, as if repressing a nervous tremble, approached Agate Bissell, and taking her by the hand, walked to the very place where Rose and Barton had been standing, and stood before the excited crowd, who wondered that even at a wedding Parson Buell should venture on such a bold jest! Then came forth Parson Edwards Dwight Bigelow, with whom Buell had many a time held glorious wassail of theology, discussing till after midnight, whether sin was born in the nature of a child or began only when developed by action; what was the nature of generous and right actions anterior to a saving change; whether conversion stood in the act of choice on the sinner's part, or was an irresistible and efficacious influence exerted upon him *ab extra.* Over these and kindred savory delights they had dissipated many a night.

There stood Parson Buell and Agate Bissell, and made answer to the solemn interrogatories, and she gave away her name, and with a blush as tender and beautiful as if she were just seventeen, she accepted her bridal kiss from Dr. Buell.

Deacon Marble was all a-tremble. The tears ran down his cheeks. "I wonder what Polly would have given to have seen this day. I guess she thinks that she died too soon. Howsomever, she couldn't help it. Well, well, well—Agate, you've took us in this time. This is the best one yit! I dew say, when I saw Parson Buell a-kissin' you, I sort of shivered all over. But you stood it beautiful. But no merit, you know, no merit, cos I s'pose you're used to it, eh?"

Agate, who really looked queenly, replied:

"Why, Deacon Marble, my husband never kissed me before in his life."

"You don't, now! I can't hardly b'lieve that. Dr. Buell is a nice and strict man. But courtin', you know, and engaged, why kissin' is accordin' to natur, and grace too. I kissed Polly a hundred times afore I married her, and you say that Buell never kissed Agate Bissell before?"

"Yes; I believe he kissed Agate *Bissell;* but he never kissed Agate *Buell* before!"

This quite overthrew the good deacon—he laughed immoderately, and repeated the story to every one on the ground, as an instance of remarkable wit.

"Fact is, I meant to have Agate mself;—wasn't spry enough—lived too far out of town. Ministers get the fust pick among the gals, any how. Polly would have liked it amazin'."

"Which?" said Hiram, giving him a nudge with his elbow.

"Which what?"

"Which of you two would Polly been glad for Agate to marry?'

"Good—good," said the deacon all in a twinkle; "if 't had been me was marryin' Agate, and Polly had been here, wouldn't she have had enough to say? Why, she would have said 'my husband;'—why, stop—if Polly 'd been here, she 'd been my wife, and I couldn't a married Agate, could I? Well, that's a good one!" said the deacon quite exhilarated with his mistake—which he endeavored to explain to several, but somehow failed to make it as fresh as when it happened of itself.

Col. Esel seemed to have charge of Rose Hetherington, and not to be displeased with the fair Quakeress. Gallant Will Belden, who had borne Arthur out of Bull Run, hobbled about as if he were one of the family. There were stories about, that he meant to be a member of it one of these days. In a moment's pause, Mrs. Wentworth turned to her husband.

"Ah, Reuben, if Arthur could only have been spared to see this! I should have been too happy."

Tears ran down her cheeks. Dr. Wentworth stood silent a moment, and then, with a deep sigh, replied:

"Arthur *is* here—sees all, knows all, and is happier than all. Nature in us yearns for his bodily presence, his noble sunny face, his ineffable smile, the bold, tender eye; but grace teaches us to think of him," said Wentworth, wiping his eyes, "without sorrow or tears, my dear; that is,"—beginning to be conscious of the tears running down his cheeks,—"without any except the tears of affection—and fond memory——"

The rest of his exposition he made to his pocket-handkerchief.

Mother Taft was grown very feeble. But she was like a winter apple that grows sweeter the longer it is kept. She seemed like an overjoyed child.

"If Taft had a-lived to see this! Rose married to Barton—and then Agate Bissell married a minister, too—that's a'most like goin' to heaven! To think that I carried Rose 'round in my arms the minute she was born—and a sweet child she was: I didn't dream I should be here and see her standin' up with Barton! May be I shall 'tend her babies jest as I did her. But I don't believe I shall ever live to see them married off. I am getting old; but somebody will see it. I hope they will be kind to them. Kindness goes a good ways, you know. You can coax a dog with meat, you know, when you can't drive him with the bone."

And so the kind old soul went on talking, without caring whether any body heard or not—her own voice seeming to be a comfort to her.

Every one was joyful; yet it was a joy strangely mixed. There were some absent who might have been there, and some dead who would never return! But it was a grief that fitted well with joy, and deepened it. Tears smiled, and smiles wept.

As the evening came on and Mrs. Wentworth walked toward the mansion with Rachel Cathcart, she said:

"Only Alice's presence was wanting to make the day perfectly happy."

"Alice," said her mother, "is very heart-sore. Life goes wearily with her. But she has determined to give her life to the instruction of the poor black children. She has gone to Lynchburg, where *his* parents lived, you know, and I hope she is happier now."

But the people are dispersing. The sun is just setting. Some linger, and seem reluctant to leave. If you too, reader, linger and feel reluctant to leave Norwood, I shall be rejoiced and repaid for the long way over which I have led you.

THE END.

MAY 29 1899
FEB 24 1900
MAY 11 '07
JAN 2 - 1909
OV - 1909
APR 29 1912
OCT 19 1912
NOV 2 - 1912
1917
25 1922
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~~JAN 8 '79~~ JL 21

June

July

Mar.

May